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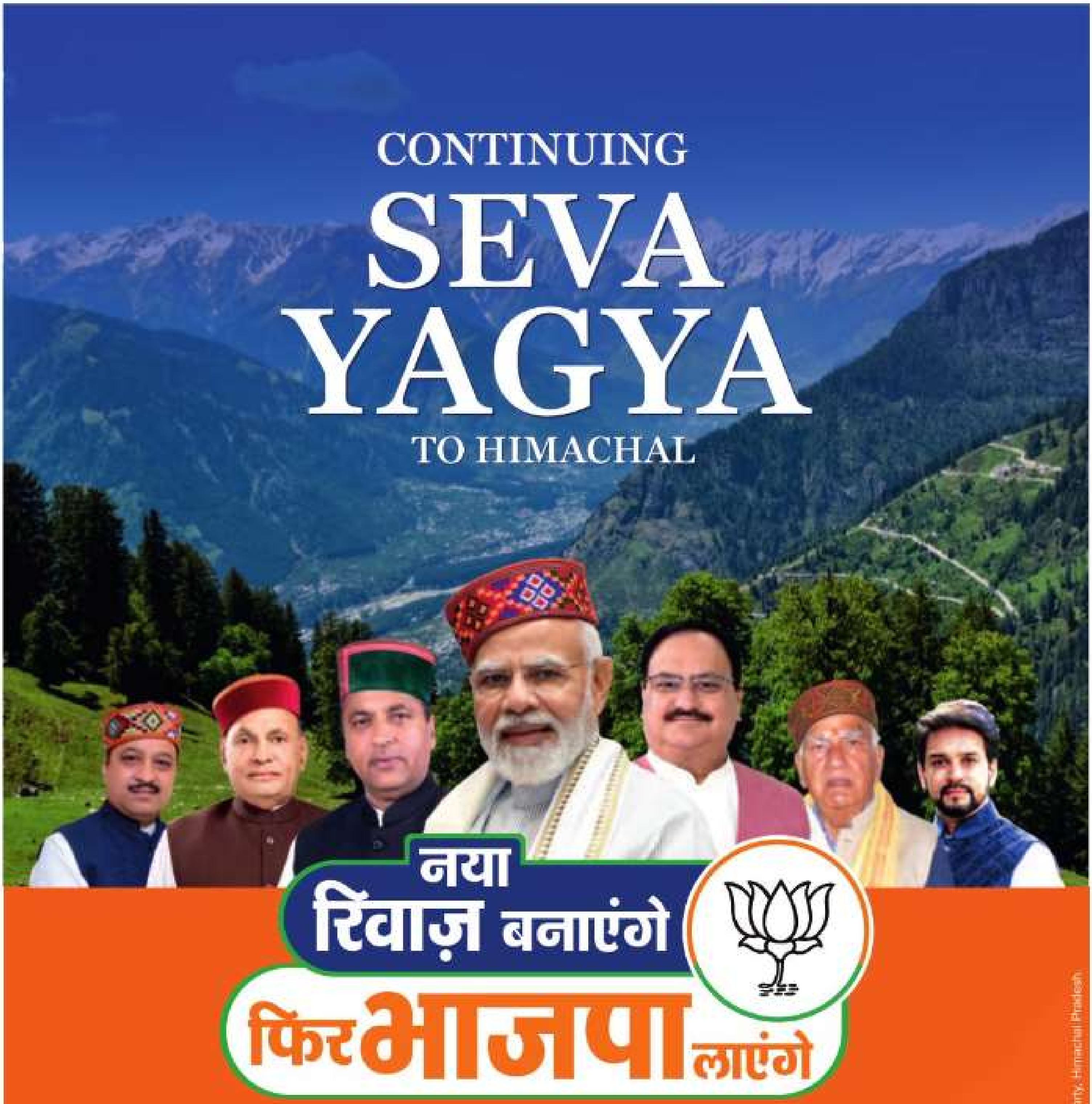

CONTINUING

SEVA YAGYA

TO HIMACHAL

नया रिवाज़ बनाएंगे

फिर भाजपा लाएंगे

Support for the Poor	Empowering Women	Zero Tolerance towards Corruption
Employment for the Youth	Care for the Elderly	Unbridled Development

Issued by: Bharatiya Janata Party, Himachal Pradesh.

कमल का बटन दबाएं भाजपा को जिताएं

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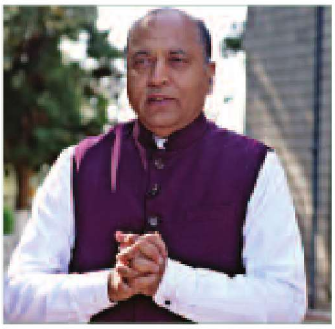

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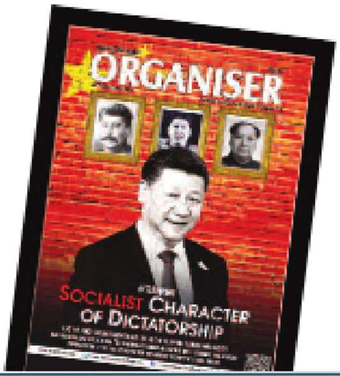
READERS' FORUM



Hindus Proud Over Sunak's Elevation

APROPOS article ‘Rishi Sunak Becomes UK's First Hindu PM’, *Organiser*, November 6, is an interesting read. Rishi Sunak is not only a Hindu, but a practicing Hindu. It is a proud moment for every Hindu. It is also nice to hear that at last Mehbooba Mufti turned ‘secular’ to make a minority candidate as PM of India. But one should also know that the word ‘secular’ was inserted in the Preamble of the Constitution through the 42nd Amendment in 1978. And people believed that India became a secular country. But, the fact of the matter is that India was a 'secular' nation from 1978 to 2019 except the State of J&K. The 42nd Amendment was never extended to the State of J&K and the secular parties fooled the nation that India is a secular country. Why? Because in J&K Muslims are in majority. This constitutional fraud continued till the temporary Article 370 guaranteeing special status was removed from August 5, 2019. So, to assume that Muftis and Abdullahs, who never allowed the State to be secular for namesake along with the rest of India, are expecting a Hindu CM for the State of J&K is a wild dream. So, a minority Hindu can become a PM of Britain, but not the CM of Jammu and Kashmir. The credit for this goes to 'secular India".

V VALMIKI, *Hyderabad*

Xi Jinping Is A Threat To Humanity

APROPOS story ‘Neighbours' Nightmare’, *Organiser*, November 6, coherently explains how the People's Republic of China has used draconian measures to subjugate the local population of Southern Mongolia, Tibet and Xinjiang. What is disturbing is that the peace-loving and docile Tibetans have been pushed against the wall and are committing self immolation as they are frustrated that the ruthless Chinese are destroying their rich cultural heritage and identity.

The return of Xi Jinping, a megalomaniac, is a serious threat not only to natives of these countries which are in illegal possession of China but also to humanity at large. The emergence of an unchallenged Xi Jinping for life is going to be a serious threat for the colonies of China.

As a permanent ruler, who would continue to rule the Communist nation with an iron fist till he is alive, Xi Jinping's ongoing campaign of establishing a Chinese society with what he has branded as universal ‘Chinese Socialist Character’ is going to catch momentum. This campaign, already going on since the past few years, is aimed at destroying national and cultural identities of natives of these countries.

VISHNU MARWAH,
Defence Colony

Empowering Women Cricketers

THE decision by the Board of Control For Cricket in India (BCCI), the biggest cricket board in the world, to pay both sexes the same international match fee recently was a watershed moment for the empowerment of sportswomen. It is a great step forward for the women's game and the third such significant move this year toward closing the enormous gender gap that afflicts the sports field globally. It will encourage a lot more girls to pursue professional cricket with the support of their parents.

The BCCI's action is expected to encourage the grooming of numerous additional young females who have aspirations of donning the national jersey. The competitive spirit so fostered should increase the talent pool and produce stronger dream teams that compete for international accolades, popularity, and branding. This could therefore pave the way for top female players to reap rewards in the shape of better endorsements and sponsorships for cricket competitions of all kinds. The board's decision is timely because our current crop of women cricket players is at their best and peaking.

VIJAY KUMAR HK,
Raichur Colony

Editorial

Lies and Hypocrisy: Dewiring Enemies of Free Press

According to the monopolistic Left-liberal media, Bharatiya democracy is again in danger, with the propaganda website, *The Wire* coming under the scanner for spreading falsehood. As a publication that always stood for freedom of the press and democratic rights of individuals, *Organiser* weekly would never endorse unreasonable curbs on the free speech of anyone, especially on media platforms. The entire war of words between *The Wire* and Meta have dewired the uneasy relationship in the Left-dominated liberal-positioned ecosystem. The series of lies, manipulations to undermine Bharat, and hypocritical stand on the free press agenda have turned this entire gang of self-proclaimed protectors of media freedom into the natural enemies of sacred democratic rights.

The Delhi Police Crime Branch conducting a search operation at the residences of *The Wire* founder Siddharth Varadarajan and Founding Editor MK Venu following an FIR registered by a BJP leader is just a small part of the larger story. The Wire claimed that Amit Malviya, in charge of the BJP's IT Cell, has privileged access to the XCheck list, the "Meta Program" that allegedly provides special privileges to high-profile users. The entire story alleging Malviya flagged over 700 posts on Instagram and Meta instantly removed the same have fallen flat. The Meta officials immediately refuted all the claims, and the names mentioned by *The Wire* story as sources also came out and publicly discredited the digital platform. Eggs on the face, *The Wire* had to retract the story in the absence of any proof and apologise to the readers with a guarantee of 'internal investigation'. Does Amit Malviya have the legal right to fight for his dignity under defamation law in a democratic system?

The Wire, unfortunately, chose to put their reporter Devesh Kumar under the bus for alleged 'supplying of fake evidence' and 'unstable mental health'. From its inception, it was clear that there was an agenda behind the creation of this portal. The entire exercise behind floating The Independent and Public Spirited Media Foundation (IPSMF) was to facilitate this media venture with capital investments from big players. Since then, *The Wire* has been on a rampage of labelling any Hindu point of view as fascist/Nazi. It was responsible for creating vaccine hesitancy by questioning the Bharat BioTech vaccine and generating panic among citizens during the pandemic. Targeting corporate houses like Adani and Ambani is a regular affair for which defamation cases are going on. In short, post-2014 digital avatars like *The Wire* celebrate negativity and spread canards about the state of democracy in Bharat. Abusing and defaming anyone without substantial proof cannot be defended as freedom of the press. If Varadarajan and the company had genuinely believed in media freedom, the reporter, Devesh Kumar, would not have become a victim of ideological hypocrisy and contract journalism.

Not surprisingly, all self-proclaimed free speech absolutists, press clubs and celebrity journalists jumped the gun and came in defence of *The Wire* and its editorial team. The same people were silent when the Maharashtra police arrested *The Republic* Editor-in-Chief Arnab Goswami on obscure charges. No club or guild uttered a word when the Popular Front of India (PFI) threatened *Organiser* for carrying news reports on its violent misdeeds based on Islamist ideology. Dozens of journalists and social media activists have been arrested in Maharashtra, Kerala and West Bengal to which these celebrities respond with stoic silence.

The fake narrative peddlers and association of journalists who are selective about free press are the actual enemies of a free press. As Dr Syama Prasad Mookerjee argued during and after the Constitution-making process, ideological differences aside, there should be some common ground of nationhood which should not be compromised for vested interests. When someone projects personal interests as national interests, then lies and hypocrisy become the convenient instruments to further the same. Instead of defending such elements, the media fraternity should expose and disown them. Then only everyone will respect the sacred right of free speech.

twitter @PrafullaKetkar

> **"As I said, it is not a Press law, that something is in danger and so you must go and pass the Press law somehow and operate it. This is not an amendment of the Constitution. It is not a political matter. In fact, we may differ on matters of politics. But there should be a fundamental agreement with regard to the need for introducing reforms into our great country, which will make our civilisation more progressive and more advanced. That should be our common ground of approach".**
>
> *—Syama Prasad Mookerjee, while speaking on the Hindu Code Bill, Parliamentary Debates, September 17, 1951, Col. 2705-2724*

OPINION

RATAN SHARDA

Columnist and Author

THE WIRE CONUNDRUM

THE COUNTRY SHOULD NOT ALLOW ITSELF TO BE TAKEN FOR A RIDE BY THE LEFT-LIBERAL CABAL IN THE NAME OF FREE SPEECH. THE WIRE SHOULD PAY A PRICE FOR ITS CRIMES

"Freedom of Speech" is a much heard of and much-debated term since 2014. It has been used and abused by various people from various political shades. It has become a catch phrase to be hurled at BJP whenever the opposing forces arrayed against Mr. Modi want to have their way. While the Left illiberal ecosystem was busy for the last eight years convincing the world that there is no freedom of speech and democracy is under threat, *The Wire* bomb exploded. It has put to the test all the assumptions about what is freedom of speech, who has it in the 'fascist' Modi regime and who is at the receiving end.

The Wire episode has also brought into sharp focus the issue of "Fake News". The dominant Left-controlled media routinely blames social media and highlights 'trolls' of the BJP for spreading fake news. The problem was genuine and ails all the players and was supposed to be limited to social media. Mainstream media (MSM) was supposed to be immune from it. There have been slanted reports for a long time. MSM too has become a views delivery platform, but MSM or powerful digital platforms were rarely called out for fake news.

The only case that created equally huge controversy around freedom of

Siddharth Varadarajan is founder of *The Wire* which has been spreading fake news

LIES OF THE WIRE

- In 2021, a Telangana court had made *The Wire* take down 14 articles it had published against Bharat Biotech, the makers of India's indigenous COVID-19 vaccine, during the pandemic.
- In 2021, when India was reeling under the onslaught of unruly farmer agitation and the shameful attack on Red Fort, *The Wire* circulated a story of a farmer who died under his own tractor, driving it recklessly to crush policemen. The story said police bullets killed him.
- In 2019, businessman and honourary secretary of BCCI Jay Shah had filed a defamation case against the portal. *The Wire* had moved to the Supreme Court after the Gujarat High Court rejected their plea against a trial court order summoning them. In the course of the arguments, Justice BR Gavai had observed, "It's nothing short of yellow journalism. What kind of journalism is this?"
- In 2018, *The Wire* published a report on alleged financial misconduct on the part Union Minister Piyush Goyal. The article accused Goyal of selling his investments in a private firm to the Piramal Group. The article also stated that Goyal allegedly kept the PMO in the dark and did not declare this transaction to the PMO. This was quickly refuted by The Primal group and they called the allegations made, 'baseless' and 'devoid of merit'. They also warned of defamatory action against the website.

speech was the case of *Republic TV*, that was cornered with that it influenced TRP ratings. But we all know the reason was its trenchant criticism of the then Maharashtra coalition Government of NCP-Shiv Sena-Congress combine. It was not a case of fake news. Not one of its reports has been found to be fake or challenged till now.

Meanwhile, there was and still is, routine harassment, arrests and shameful persecution of individual social media activists or simple users. It is worse as these individuals have hardly a political agenda except pin-pricking powerful politicians.

But let us come back to the high-profile cases of *The Wire* and *Republic TV*.

The two represent the two ends of the spectrum of political thought. The former running on funding from public and powerful industry–run funds, unabashedly Leftist with world-wide network and an open agenda of opposing and defaming Modi, nationalist organisations and Hindutva. The latter is self-financed; currently, the only journalist-run TV channel and unabashedly pro-Modi, anti-Left and professed nationalist. The idea of Freedom of Speech has no ideological colour, or so we are made to believe.

True journalism means presenting news and sharing your views as views, not news. It means ferreting out facts and letting readers decide even while you share your opinions openly on your platform. Journalism is not an agenda-driven activism camouflaged as journalism. Even politically committed news and views, media must maintain certain decorum and integrity.

The *Republic TV* owner, Arnab Goswami, was dragged out of his home by an armed police posse after subtle and not-so-subtle threats didn't work. He had exposed the Careless Government that didn't work. It was a vendetta from a government that couldn't control law and order, that let cases of Palghar Sadhu's lynching and a rising star's suicide or murder. It was a time when two top police officers committed the most heinous crime of manipulating the law and its power to make money and browbeat a TV channel. Top officers of the channel – CFO, CEO, and journalists were also arrested and persecuted at the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic. Hundreds of members of staff faced police cases and threats of arrest. The corrupt police officers were in cahoots with the ruling alliance. If there was some solid evidence of fake news or hate-mongering against any community, one could understand. It was not prosecution or persecution for fake news; it was a show of state power that forced fake cases on a media house.

Arnab Goswami, the owner of *Republic TV* in police custody

The Wire's influential founder Siddharth Varadarajan was caught with pants down for spreading fake news and, when caught, was found manufacturing evidence to justify his organisation's foul play. Were it not a powerful MNC like Meta, Varadarajan would have brazened his way out of this mess as a self-righteous defender of democracy. Unfortunately for him, he hit a wall like Meta. Just a few weeks prior to this story, was the story of Tek Fog that was invented by *The Wire* team (claiming to have worked on it for weeks) to show the ruling party BJP and its IT head Amit Malviya as some sort of fascists out to crush any opposition. Both cases became global news with the active cooperation of the ecosystem to the extent that India's democratic rankings were downgraded by their friendly watchdogs. When the founding editors apologised from a high moral ground, there was no apology to the real victims of *The Wire*'s shenanigans.

Those who talk of closing the case with an apology want us to forget that it was not the first time that *The Wire* was seen as a propaganda vehicle of the left out to defame national forces and the nation. However, its target was Modi - the most powerful symbol of a reawakened Bharat.

Bharat Biotech, inventors of Covaxin, were defamed and fake stories circulated that were shared by global platforms. It was an attempted sabotage of India's efforts to develop her vaccine. Bharat had to move courts that ordered The Wire to take down 14 stories and bar it from publishing more stories. Imagine the agenda of stopping the development of the Indian vaccine when the world was tottering with a disaster of epic proportions. But the mighty editors were neither arrested nor raided.

When India was reeling under the onslaught of unruly farmer agitation and the shameful attack on Red Fort, *The Wire* circulated a story of a farmer who died under his own tractor, driving it recklessly to crush policemen. The story said police bullets killed him. Despite the report from the doctor who did the post-mortem that there was no bullet injury, and the person didn't die of a bullet injury, the publication went on to cast aspersions on the doctor and did not withdraw the report. No member of *The Wire* was harassed. When both the recent stories of *The Wire* went up in smoke, Amit Malviya made a police complaint for defamation. Simultaneously, the ED raided Siddhartha's residence and office to search for evidence of data manipulation and false evidence creation as per statements from Meta and other sources. He was not arrested like his 'professional comrade' Arnab.

And the ecosystem woke up to the oppression of freedom of speech! We had the usual suspects from the illiberal class defending *The Wire* and criticising the government. The high priest of liberalism, N Ram, the great venerable international magazine *The Economist* came out to defend Siddharth and his baby. Opposition spokespersons came to TV to protect freedom of speech and seek to absolve a criminal act because the great man had apologised.

Did any of these worthies support *Republic TV* and Arnab when he was persecuted? His only crime was his abrasive style. None of his stories was manufactured fake news. Did any 'liberal' stand up for his freedom of speech? No! The politicians defending *The Wire* today were laughing at Arnab and his team. One minister, now in jail, said gleefully, "Arnab might commit suicide." Did any illiberal condemn it? No sir. Why? Because the torch bearers of secularism ran the government!

The industry watchdogs like NBA and Editor's Guild went silent in the case of *Republic TV*. In fact, Editor's Guild criticised *Republic TV* based on a fake TRP manipulation case. Did any of them apologise after the truth was out? No! The same Editor's Guild issued a strong press statement based on fake story of The Wire about the oppression of freedom of speech. But, after the fakery was exposed, it simply washed its hands off. It called for closing the issue since The Wire had issued an apology that was more to absolve its owners and make a scapegoat of a young reporter whose professional life is in ruins now.

NOT AN INDIAN CITIZEN

One point that has escaped public scrutiny is that Varadarajan is not even a citizen of India. He is an OIC cardholder, to the best of my knowledge. Should foreigners be allowed to dictate newspaper policies & news dissemination? How dangerous this can be is seen in this latest conundrum.

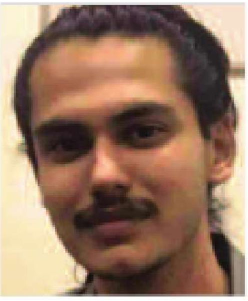
Yet again, we can see that "Freedom of Speech" is a one-way street patrolled by illiberal liberals who can decide the driving direction of the street and penalise the offenders. It is a one-eyed class that had lost all sense of judgement and played partisan politics when none was required, as we can see from the gross contrast in the cases of the two media houses. This case also illustrates that the left lobby can go to any extent to defame India and its leaders, and its culture. It can use its international lobby to create huge echo across the globe that shows India in a very poor light while our Prime Minister is trying his best to create a positive image of India with pro-active global action for the welfare of humankind. The only reason is that this cabal looking at 'poor wretched' India through western eyes cannot tolerate an India rooted in its culture and proud of its heritage. It is time to stand up to this intellectual bullying and free ourselves to enjoy true freedom of speech. ■

Meta Communication chief Andy Stone and *The Wire* co-founder Siddharth Varadarajan

IN DEFENSE OF THE WIRE

INDIAN JOURNALISTS, OR EVEN NON-INDIAN ONES SETTLED HERE, SPEAKING TRUTH TO POWER WHEN WE HAVE A GOVERNMENT THAT DOES NOT RESONATE WITH THEIR IDEA OF INDIA, ARE GOD'S GIFTS TO HUMANITY. WE MUST NEVER FORGET THAT SIDDHARTH VARADARAJAN IS AN HONOURABLE MAN

SATIRE



AJIT DATTA

Columnist and Author of *Himanta Biswa Sarma: From Boy Wonder To CM*

For those fighting against Modi's supposed fascism and undeclared emergency, *The Wire* has been a ray of hope, upholding whatever little democracy is left in India. Yes, they lied. Yes, they fabricated emails and screenshots. They tarnished the image of a global tech giant and India's ruling party. Yes, they now have to retract the story and many other stories in the process. Yes, it is not the first time. But *The Wire*, in its apology, clearly tells us that it was only a one-off case of technically illiterate crusaders being misled by villain Devesh Kumar. And, as we know, Siddharth is an honourable man.

The Wire first claimed that the IT Cell chief of India's ruling party Amit Malviya was receiving preferential treatment from Meta, the owners of Facebook, Instagram and Whatsapp. According to *The Wire*, Instagram would take down any post that Malviya found objectionable, no questions asked. As proof, it furnished screenshots of what it claimed was internal communication. When Meta's communication chief Andy Stone denied the story, *The Wire* published what it claimed to be emailed from Stone himself, demanding answers and covering up the story. When doubts were raised about the email's veracity on grounds ranging from technicality to bad English, *The Wire* claimed two experts had authenticated the mail. When the two experts said they had never authenticated anything, *The Wire* continued to brazen it out until it could no longer and retracted the story. But The Wire, being the paragon of virtue, had no reason to believe that the whole world was right and only they were wrong. And Siddharth is an honourable man.

The Wire apologised to everyone except those they had maligned, like Andy Stone and Amit Malviya. During the saga, many pointed out that the English in the fabricated emails did not seem to be written by the communications chief of the world's largest social media conglomerate. But it did not raise a red flag among the Editors. Moreover, today it is claimed that the Editors and the management were misled, but Jahnavi Sen and Siddharth

THE WIRE Vs META

- On October 6, *The Wire* reported that Instagram removed a photograph of Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath's 'temple' for violating its guidelines. As per the report, the image was uploaded by Instagram handle @cringearchivist, and it was removed over 'sexual activity and nudity' restrictions.
- On October 10, the propaganda portal *The Wire* published a report with the title '*If BJP's Amit Malviya Reports Your Post, Instagram Will Take it Down – No Questions Asked*'.
- In the report, *The Wire* claimed that BJP's IT Cell Chief Amit Malviya has such power in Meta, that if he reports any post on the platform, it gets removed by the system, no questions asked.
- Later, *The Wire* published the 'explosive expose' that the video of CM Yogi's temple was allegedly flagged by none other than Amit Malviya. It further reported that the appeal against the removal was denied because of the privileges Malviya enjoyed for being on the XCheck list. Also, *The Wire* claimed that 100 % of over 700 posts flagged from Malviya's account were removed instantly.
- Soon after the report was published, Meta officials took onto Twitter to refute the claims made by *The Wire*.
- Following Stone's rebuttal, *The Wire* came up with another story on October 11, where they alleged that the documents they used were not fabricated. To support their allegations, *The Wire* shared a screenshot of an alleged mail by Andy Stone where he was upset that an internal document had been leaked to them.
- Meta's Chief Information Security Officer Guy Rosen had to come out and clear the air that *The Wire*'s entire reporting is fabricated and based on forged documents. Guy Rosen shared a thread where he detailed how *The Wire*'s reports don't hold any water.
- On October 29, *The Wire* filed a complaint at the Economic Offence Wing of the Delhi Police against its former employee and so-called 'researcher' Devesh Kumar, claiming he provided forged documents with "an intent to malign *The Wire*'s reputation".
- On October 29, Amit Malviya filed a complaint with Delhi Police against *The Wire*, its editors, and reporters and said they published a series of stories with the intent to tarnish his reputation.

Amit Malviya
National Convener, IT Cell, BJP

Vardarajan also bylined the second story. If they did not know what they were writing about or could not verify things for themselves, did they simply paradrop on Devesh's story to take credit? Now *The Wire* claims it was Devesh all along and have filed a police complaint against him. On what basis do the other two suddenly stop being complicit? And if Siddharth knows he has been taken for a ride, on what basis does Jahnavi get a clean chit, but Devesh does not? But *The Wire*, one of India's few independent media outlets that survive, must have its reasons. And Siddharth is an honourable man.

Devesh Kumar is an interesting figure in the entire saga. Devesh was *The Wire*'s budding superstar who had already taken down many giants, considered amongst the most tech-savvy people in the country. He had claimed to run a parallel IT Cell against the regime, trying to stay one step ahead of the regime's bot game. When Devesh unearthed the Tek Fog story, Siddharth had showered praise on him. When questions were raised about the Meta story, Siddharth was interviewed by a publication called *Platformer*, which asked him about Devesh's credibility. "I don't think we should make this about Devesh, frankly," Siddharth replied. "This should be equally about me, I was hands on involved in the story." Siddharth also tweeted a few days into the saga, when some people speculated that *The Wire* had been taken for a ride, rubbishing the possibility. "Apart from Meta's 'fabrication' charge, some folks are saying @thewire_in may have been 'played' by unknown elements out to discredit us or further some outlandish conspiracy. This is ridiculous. Our stories came from multiple Meta sources—whom we know, have met & verified," he tweeted. But now, in its police complaint, *The Wire* says that Devesh supplied them with fabricated documents and that he seemed highly disturbed mentally. And, of course, Siddharth is an honourable man.

Another story that *The Wire* has been forced to retract is the Tek Fog story because Devesh had been the brain who had unearthed that as well. This story was about a software application that the BJP supposedly uses to infiltrate social media platforms and push favourable agendas. Until last month, it was considered to be one of *The Wire's* crowning achievements. Many international publications like the 'Washington Post, Bloomberg, Le Monde' and others portal's it, giving the BJP a bad name internationally. The Wire's story has been retracted, but these articles in the international press continue to stand. A Wikipedia page about it still exists at the time of writing this article. Who takes responsibility for all the damage it has caused? But *The Wire* cannot be expected to do so because if every little

> *The Wire* has destroyed core of journalism. It is not good to run any kind of agenda based on fake news. But right now this is a matter of consideration why *The Wire* runs a fake agenda. It's not the first case when *The Wire* was found misleading the news
>
> — KANCHAN GUPTA
>
> Senior Adviser, Ministry of I&B

> Bosses of *The Wire* run a series of stories based on repeated forgery, and kept doubling down. When caught, all sanctimonious preaching ends. To save their own skin, they scapegoat reporter Devesh Kumar. Character of our 'liberal' intelligentsia.
>
> — ABHIJIT MAJUMDER
>
> Editor-in-chief of earshot.in

retraction is used to blame them for the repercussions of their stories, then we cannot expect this dedicated outlet to go about its journalism freely. And Siddharth is an honourable man.

The claim that it was a one-off error on the part of *The Wire*, that they have apologised and it is now time to move on, has also been questioned by many. After all, this is the same portal that was taken to court for its reportage of the Rafale deal in 2018. In 2019, Home Minister Amit Shah's son Jay Shah had filed a defamation case against the portal. *The Wire* had moved to the Supreme Court after the Gujarat High Court rejected their plea against a trial court order summoning them. In the course of the arguments, Justice BR Gavai had observed, "It's nothing short of yellow journalism. What kind of journalism is this?" Earlier this year, a Telangana court had made *The Wire* take down 14 articles it had published against Bharat Biotech, the makers of India's indigenous Covid-19 vaccine, during the pandemic. One social media user pointed out that if you run a simple google search of the words "an earlier version of this article" for *The Wire*, an ocean of results pops up. This indicates that the content of the portal's articles are routinely changed, even after they are published. If there is a constant need to update the same articles, it is not because the story has developed, for those additions could be made without changing the initial facts. It is because the content itself is often found wanting. But if some people cannot understand *The Wire's* impeccable investigative journalism and the twists and turns it takes, *The Wire* cannot be held responsible. And Siddharth is an honourable man.

Many are now bringing up the past about the publication's founding editor, the circumstances under which a national daily sacked him, or how he withheld the reporting of a major scam. This is completely uncalled for. If anything, *The Wire* is really the victim in this story. Despite so many instances of fake news and the consequent attempts to bring The Wire to its knees, it is evident that they have finally fallen only because they dared to take on American "big tech". However, every American news outlet keeps taking on American big tech, blaming them for unfavourable election results or the suppression of crucial stories. This clearly indicates that either *The Wire*'s story was not good enough or The Wire is not American enough to pull this off. *The Wire* is the real victim here, and Siddharth is an honourable man.

Now, there is massive outrage that the police have raided the residences of *The Wire*'s Editors. Yes, we are well aware of what they did, but how can journalists be raided in a democracy for a little bit of forgery, they ask. Is it not blatant authoritarianism when the law taking its course comes in the way of press freedom, they argue? *Journalist hein, galti ho jati hai*, they seem to tell us, slightly altering Mulayam's age-old maxim. There is no argument here. Indian journalists, or even non-Indian ones settled here, speaking truth to power when we have a government that does not resonate with their idea of India, are god's gifts to humanity. Who are we, the unperfumed masses, to question them or subject them to the country's laws? We are not even civil society, for that matter. We are only worthy of bowing down and accepting everything these eminences do and say as the gospel truth. And come what may, we must never forget that Siddharth is an honourable man. ■

"WILL BUCK THE TREND OF INCUMBENT PARTY NOT RETURNING TO POWER"

Even as the winter sets, the political temperature is rising in the hilly State of Himachal Pradesh. The ruling BJP is making a determined bid to retain power by debunking the past trend; the Congress hopes to make a comeback. In an exclusive interview with Organiser National News Coordinator Nishant Kumar Azad in Shimla, Chief Minister Jairam Thakur said that for the first time, Himachal is witnessing pro-incumbency. With the slogan of *Raj Nahin, Riwaaz Badlenge*, we are coming back to power with a full majority. Excerpts:

- What is Bharatiya Janata Party's key agenda to seek votes in the Assembly polls?

Our agenda has always been development and public welfare. In the last five years, despite the COVID–19 pandemic, we have done a lot of development work. We have done things, which even the six-time Chief Minister of Congress could not do. For the first time, Ayushman and Himcare schemes were introduced for the free treatment of people. For the first time, Sahara Yojana is being run for needy people. Free gas connections are being given to poor people under the Ujjwala and Grihini Suvidha Yojana for the first time. Shagun Yojna was introduced for the first time, and financial assistance of Rs 31,000 is being given for the marriage of daughters of BPL families. The Swavalamban scheme was started for the first time to make the youth self-reliant. All these schemes were started for the first time, and Rs 1,033 crore has been spent on them. There are more than 10 lakh beneficiaries of these schemes. We can confidently say that this much work has been done in a single tenure.

- But the Opposition says that no work has been done in the last five years.

There is no Assembly constituency in which development works worth more than Rs 150-200 crore have not been done. While allotting development work, we did not look at the political affiliation of a particular MLA. You will see that many Congress MLAs have posted on Facebook that works worth Rs 200 crore have been done in their area. So, how did this happen? We have moved ahead on the basic mantra of *Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas* and *Sabka Prayas*. We do not do politics of discrimination and favouritism.

- **Do you think after five years in power, the BJP is facing anti-incumbency in Himachal Pradesh?**

As far as anti-incumbency is concerned, Himachal Pradesh is witnessing pro-incumbency for the first time. I have been working among people and visited each and every Assembly constituency three to four times in the last four-and-a-half years. Apart from rallies and meetings, I kept on meeting people. If you travel across the State, you will find that there is not a single issue that has created resentment among the people. Even Congress and Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) are not able to raise any issue against us.

- **Himachal Pradesh has a tradition of voting out the existing Government. A second consecutive term for the party in power has been a rarity in the State. How do you see this?**

Dekhiye tradition bane hain to kabhi wo tradition tutte bhi hain. Our slogan in the elections is *Raj Nahin,*

Photo: Ashutosh Kumar

> The long-overdue decision to accord tribal status to the Hattis is an achievement. We have not done this for political gains. I am happy that the cause we have been fighting for since 1967 has been taken to the logical conclusion

Riwaaz Badlenge (Not power, but the custom of alternating power will change). We are coming back to power with a full majority.

- **The result of bypolls in the State was not in favour of the BJP. The party lost all four seats by big margins. Don't you think that the results of bypolls will have an impact on the current Assembly polls? What gives you the confidence to win the upcoming Assembly election?**

There is a different atmosphere during the Assembly elections, while bypolls are fought on other issues. In the Mandi Lok Sabha seat, Congress sought sympathy votes in the name of a departed leader. Consequently, we also did some experiments in some Assembly seats. So the results were not in our favour at that time. A year has passed since those elections.

Presently, you can see how positive the atmosphere is for the present BJP Government. The work of a double-engine Government gives us confidence, and people are with us.

- **Your opponents blame the BJP has failed to control inflation and creating**

> The ticket distribution mechanism in the BJP is very different from other parties. We have given tickets based on many factors, multiple surveys and winnability. Many rebels have indeed filed their nomination papers this time, but this will not make a big impact

job opportunities. They also alleged that there is a rise in corruption in your tenure.

Inflation and unemployment are complex and intertwined subjects. There has traditionally been an inverse correlation between inflation and unemployment. If the opposition has so much understanding of inflation, then why did they not stop the inflation rate from rising in Chhattisgarh and Rajasthan? Inflation is troubling the world today, and I believe this period will not last long. We have made sincere efforts to provide employment. For five years, we kept filling vacant posts in various Government departments. We started the Swavalamban scheme. Today, in Himachal Pradesh, more than ten thousand people have got employment through this scheme.

Apart from this, we have organised investor meets and two ground-breaking ceremonies to generate employment in the private sector. Despite the pandemic, we have been able to provide employment to about sixty thousand people in Government and private sectors. If there was no pandemic, this figure would have been higher. We aim to employ maximum youth, and this process will continue when we return to power. Projects like Bulk Drug Park and medical device parks will be big game-changers.

- **Please tell us more about the project. How it will benefit the State?**

Well, when the pandemic struck, there was a shortage of medicines. As a result, black-marketing of medicines was rampant. The reason for the shortage was due to our dependence on China for API (active pharmaceutical ingredients). Due to the pandemic, the supply was hit.

PM Modi gave thought to preparing raw materials in India instead of buying them from other countries. And the only way out was to set up a drug park that would help reduce dependence on China. In an evaluation by the Centre, Himachal was placed at number one when bids for three bulk drug pharma projects were invited. The park will provide a huge impetus to the socio-economic development of the entire region. It would not only meet the demand of the pharma industry of the State but cater to the demand from across the country. Setting up the Bulk Drug Park would help reduce India's dependency on China for raw materials. This is an important project for a small State like Himachal Pradesh.

- **The BJP has denied tickets to 11 MLAs, including a Minister and shifted the constituencies of two Ministers. Your rivals allege that the BJP has sensed defeat. What's your take on this?**

Look, this happens in all elections. The ticket distribution mechanism in the BJP is very different from other parties. We have given tickets based on many factors, multiple surveys and winnability. Many rebels have indeed filed their nomination papers, this time, but this will not make a big impact. Things are under control. Today when the Opposition has no issue, they are talking senseless and pointless.

- **With new-found confidence after the Punjab elections, AAP is also trying its hand in Himalayan politics. How much of a threat is AAP to the BJP?**

Jab inhone Punjab jeeta tha, tab inka hosla badha tha lekin jaldi hi woh expose ho gae (When they won the Punjab Assembly elections, they were high on energy, but soon they got exposed and their true face came to the fore). The misdeeds and corruption by big

> It was Congress who snatched the status of special State from Himachal. But when the Modi-led BJP Government was formed at the Centre, the State got back the special status

Ministers of AAP are making headlines every day. The AAP has no standing in Himachal Pradesh.

- **The Congress has promised to provide 300 units of electricity free to household consumers and Rs 1,500 to women every month. The AAP, too, has promised 300 units of power free to household consumers and Rs 1,000 to women every month. Are you in favour or against the 'freebies' based populist announcements of the AAP and the Congress?**

There is a difference between welfare and *revdi* or 'freebies'. For example, today, electricity is a need of every person. On an average, poor households spend 100 to 120 units of electricity a month. A financially well-off family spends an average of 200 to 300 units. We have tried to help the poor because it is their need.

We are providing 125 units of free electricity. It is a relief for certain sections of society whose consumption is limited. Broadly, low-income families (for example, those who use three bulbs and consume around 60 units) and middle-class families (for instance, those who use six bulbs and consume around 120 units) are covered under this. We also provide women with a 50 per cent discount on bus fares. But, mind you, this is discount, not free travel.

On the other hand, Congress does not want to help the poor. For example, its leaders are promising that women will be given money every month. But why have they not given a similar scheme in Rajasthan and Chhattisgarh, where they are already in power? The answer is that the Congress leaders know they will not be able to give all this, but they are still making false promises. But the people of Himachal are wise enough. They know everyone's intention.

- **The Old Pension Scheme (OPS) has become a major poll issue here. Right from Congress to AAP, both have announced the restoration of OPS in Himachal if they come to power. Both parties had already announced the implementation of OPS in their ruling States. A group of several Government employees have been protesting and demanding the implementation of the OPS. Don't you think it will create trouble for BJP's electoral prospects?**

I want to ask Congress which was in power when OPS was voluntarily closed down. It was Virbhadra Singh who did it in 2003. Why did he not restore OPS when he again returned to power in 2012? He implemented NPS from the back date. Even then, Virbhadra Singh kept saying that restoring OPS is not practical and the financial burden cannot be sustained by a small hill State of meagre resources.

But we understood the problem of the employees and made the provision of family pension from the back date for the employees coming under NPS. Our Government made a provision of more than Rs 700 crore for this.

Two Congress Governments – Rajasthan and Chattisgarh –which have taken in principle decisions, are now asking for the Centre's help. None of the Congress Governments, so far, have implemented OPS. Congress is only spreading lies about OPS while we are considering this demand sensitively and seriously. The people no longer trust Congress. It has never fulfilled any of its promises, be it a "job to every member of the family", unemployment allowance to youths or loan waivers.

> Projects like Bulk Drug and Medical Device Parks will be big game-changers. The park would provide a huge impetus to the socio-economic development of the entire region. Setting up the Bulk Drug Park would help reduce India's dependency on China for pharma raw materials

> OPS was stopped during the Congress regime in 2003. Why did Virbhadra Singh not restore OPS when he returned to power in 2012? He kept saying that restoring OPS is not practical. Congress is only spreading lies about OPS while we are trying to find a practical solution to this issue

We are trying to find a practical solution regarding the issue of OPS. It is a fact that no State can implement OPS in a true sense without the help of the Central Government.

- **A large section of Himachal Pradesh lives in deprivation due to difficult geographical conditions. What did your Government do for them?**

Jo Gareeb hain, Hum Unke Kareeb hain, (we are close to the poorest of the poor). We have acted in this spirit. The job of the Government is to make people's lives easier. Those who are in need should be taken care of first. That's what we did. Today, about seven-and-a-half lakh people are being given pensions. In the Congress Government, pension was given from the age of 70 years. Our Government reduced the age of eligibility to 60 years. They used to spend Rs 400 crore annually; we are spending Rs 1,300 crore. Apart from this, we did not leave any stone unturned in development of the hill State.

Let me also give you another example. Himachal Pradesh had 7.63 lakh domestic tap connections as of December 2017. In the last three years alone, 8.65 lakh new tap connections were installed under the Jal Jeevan Mission so that water could be supplied through taps. In the last five years, 5,854 km of roads were constructed under PMGSY. For this, an amount of Rs 2,733 crore was approved by the Centre. Has anyone ever thought that such a big development work could have been done by one Government and that too in difficult times like COVID-19?

- **The Opposition is saying that if you had worked for the people, PM Modi should not have come here time and again.**

Modi ji is our leader. Our double-engine Government works under his leadership and guidance. The Prime Minister considers Himachal Pradesh as his second home, and the people of Devbhoomi also return the same love to him. Congress is troubled by this fact. It does not have any leader who understands Himachal.

On the contrary, when the Congress Government was at the Centre, it not only reduced the duration of the industrial package given by Atal ji but also snatched the special status of Himachal. But Modi ji again gave that special status to the State. Apart from this, Modi Government gave medical colleges, Bilaspur AIIMS, Bulk Drug Park, and Medical Device Park, etc. In return for these gifts, the people of Himachal will give him a historic victory. Congress has also understood this, so now it has started targeting the PM.

- **The Centre has launched several initiatives for the beautification of religious sites. Do you have something in mind on this line related to Himachal?**

Yes, we have already started working on this line. Shiv Dham is being constructed at Kangani Dhar near Mandi town at an estimated cost of over Rs 200 crore. The work of the first phase is about to complete. The work of the second phase of Shiv Dham would be started soon after completing all the formalities. This is an ambitious project, and with this, Mandi would emerge firmly on the religious-cultural tourism map of the country. We are also working to develop important religious sites under Asian Development Bank infrastructure development project.

- **In September this year, the Union Cabinet approved a Constitution Amendment Bill that seeks to grant tribal status to the Hatti community living in the trans-Giri region of Himachal Pradesh. Will the move help BJP to garner votes of the community in the coming polls?**

We have not done this for political gains. But, yes, the long-overdue decision to accord tribal status to the Hattis is an achievement. I am happy that the cause we have been fighting for since 1967 has been taken to the logical conclusion. ■

Prime Minister Narendra Modi blows a trumpet at the inauguration and stone-laying foundation ceremony of development projects in the presence of Union Minister for Youth Affairs and Sports Anurag Thakur, Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur and BJP National President JP Nadda, in Bilaspur

MODI MAGIC, THE PLUS FACTOR

A VIBRANT ORGANISATION SET-UP, PERFORMANCE OF THE STATE GOVERNMENT, DIVIDED OPPOSITION AND MODI MAGIC ARE LIKELY TO HELP BJP RETAIN POWER IN HIMACHAL PRADESH

OPINION

SANJAY SINGH

Columnist

Kullu Dussehra is known for its grandeur and popular enthusiasm across the country. The scenic beauty of the place, all decked up Rath Yatra, the milling crowd, and the chants have been a great attraction from time immemorial. But it had never drawn the Prime Minister of the country to its charm until October this year when Narendra Modi decided to participate in the joyous festival.

It goes without saying that he would have given heed to the advice of security agencies. Being there meant that Prime Minister Modi was going to be at a ground where people occupied every single inch and where no security barricades could be erected for his protection. He was going to be one among them. An election or no election, his move conveyed two very important messages to the people of Himachal Pradesh – first, he took pride in its civilisational and cultural legacy and wanted to give a greater push, along with other developmental aspects. He had gone there after inaugurating a modern multi-speciality AIIMS in Bilaspur, laying foundation stones, and inaugurating a series of other developmental projects in this Himalayan State.

Second, security protocols were not a barrier for him to be among his people. His presence hugely enthused people and has been a talking point since then. Since this is election time in the State and people of the region have deep emotion connected with their cultural symbols, more so with the unique Kullu Dussehra, its implications are bound to shape the voting preferences of sections of people–favouring the BJP.

Himachal Pradesh so far has an electoral tradition of exiting the incumbent in the election after every five years. Some take this as an easy route to predict the possible outcome of this election. The Congress and its supporters make a further addition to this analysis that in by-elections held last year, the ruling BJP lost Mandi parliamentary and three assembly seats to the Congress.

Two things are important here. First, the by-election results are never a pointer to the mood of the voters in general elections. By-election results in Uttar Pradesh for the last ten years and results of two parliamentary and two assembly elections in this period are a case in point. Last year's by-elections rang alarm bells in the BJP, and it is more than evident that its leadership took notice of that. On the other hand, Congress became complacent, and its so-called High Command went into a sleep mode.

Second, the BJP, since 2014 is a new BJP; it has acquired a different vigour, far more energetic both in terms of strategy and implementing its planning on the ground. It neither becomes complacent in favourable situations nor loses heart in adverse conditions, least of all data analysis five-year rotation. It has grown an amazing appetite to fight and win. Armchair analysts and all their theories proved wrong in Uttrakhand, Uttar Pradesh, Assam and elsewhere. Early this year, Uttrakhand was a unique case where the BJP practically snatched a comfortable victory in the closing months out of the jaws of an almost imminent defeat. One understands that each election is different, but the only limited point here is simple—one should begin looking at Himachal Pradesh elections by discounting the five-year rotation thought.

Let's consider the situation on the ground, and begin with Congress, the perceived main challenger. It begs a straightforward question—is Congress serious about these elections? In the run-up to elections in Himachal Pradesh and Gujarat, and when his party was breaking up all over, across different states, the de-facto boss of the party, Rahul Gandhi, embarked on a *Bharat Jodo Yatra*. The entire party machinery is busy managing that re-re-re-re launch of Rahul. The rest of the party establishment was busy conducting a sham internal election to thrust a Gandhi proxy, Mallikarjun Kharge, to the president's post, relinquished by Gandhi after close to two-and-half-decades. The central party in-charge of Himachal elections was till recently with a BCCI nomination for self than here.

PRIYANKA'S FLOP SHOW

Priyanka Gandhi Vadra lately landed in parts of Himachal Pradesh. She is more focused on reminding who she was – the granddaughter of Indira Gandhi. But then she has nothing substantive to say about what great things Indira did for Himachal Pradesh and why people of the State should still vote for Congress.

In her enthused sense of entitlement, Priyanka forgets that people may make a judgment about the prime land in Shimla, where she has constructed a bungalow. She and her advisors also forget that Indira Gandhi died 38 years ago; thus, anyone under 42-45 years of age wouldn't recall her former Prime Minister grandma. It remains to be seen how an 80-year-old new Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge brings energy and vigour to campaign in the State.

Another challenger, the Aam Aadmi Party, which

On A Strong Wicket

Predicting the results of an Assembly election in Himachal Pradesh is an uphill task, given the nature of the tiny but complex State. It is a highly diverse State, with multiple languages and dialects spoken within its boundaries. The State has 68 Assembly seats with most seats having less than 90,000 voters. In some constituencies such as Lahaul and Spiti, the total number of electors won't cross 30,000-mark. Lesser voters mean narrower margins. Even a shift of a few hundred votes can decide the outcome of the election. The situation within the BJP was not so bright in the run-up to the election, though it looks pretty confident now. The party's rout in the Assembly byelections and the rebel factor could have been a spoiler but it had managed to bring order in the house with fresh blood and a few new candidates.

The new central leadership of the BJP which has a track record of snatching victory from the jaws of defeat is quite remarkable. Therefore, even seasoned poll analysts are treading cautiously. Going by the data, BJP has a strong presence in 18 seats where the party is likely to win hands down. In about 20 seats, where the result can swing either side, BJP managed to close the gap. With Congress, the main rival, in a bad shape and its leadership totally disheartened, the party can't put up a good fight in these constituencies, making the job easier for the BJP. Aam Aadmi Party which came with a bang turned out to be a damp squib.

By refusing tickets to non-performers has also helped the BJP tide over the anti-incumbency to a great extent. This is not to discredit the rebel factor. But the BJP is confident that even if a couple of rebels win, they could be roped in at a later stage. The Modi factor is another which would work in favour of the BJP. In the coming days, Prime Minister Narendra Modi will take part in some rallies. The party believes that the disgruntled BJP supporters will be swayed back to its fold after these rallies. ***–Organiser Bureau*** made too much sound and fury till a few months ago about Himachal, has now virtually stopped its campaign before the election schedule for the State. AAP's State president Anup Kesari joined BJP with almost the entire AAP's newfound organisational set-up. Union Minister Anurag Thakur, a four-time MP from the State, played a key role in inflicting humongous embarrassment to Arvind Kejriwal and his party. AAP's in-charge for Himachal Pradesh, a Minister in the Kejriwal Government in Delhi, Satyendra Jain, landed in jail money–laundering case and has since not got bail from a court of law.

HIMACHAL PRADESH POLLS-2022

PARTY	2017 RESULTS
BJP	44
INC	21
AAP	0
OTHERS	3
TOTAL	68

TOTAL SEATS 68

POLLING DATE
NOV 12, 2022

POLL RESULT
DEC 08, 2022

The BJP, however, is not taking any chances. Besides breaking the five-year rotation electoral norm and thus scripting a new chapter in Himachal political history, this election has another significance for the party. Rebellion by some party leaders, some serving MLAs who were denied tickets and some who aspired for access, surely gave troubled time to the party leadership. The party is working on this.

"*Modiji ko campaign ke liye aane dijiye, phir dekhiyega kaise lahar banegi* (Let Modiji come and then see how a pro-incumbency wave is built)", is the refrain among BJP supporters. ■

भाऊराव देवरस सेवा न्यास, लखनऊ

भाऊराव देवरस स्मृति सेवा सम्मान हेतु प्रविष्टि आमंत्रित

स्व. भाऊराव जी की स्मृति में मा. अटल बिहारी वाजपेयी जी की अध्यक्षता में भाऊराव देवरस सेवा न्यास की स्थापना वर्ष 1993 में हुई। शिक्षा और स्वास्थ्य के क्षेत्र में सेवा कार्य हेतु स्थापित न्यास द्वारा चलाये जा रहे विभिन्न सेवा प्रकल्पों में एक है भाऊराव देवरस स्मृति सेवा सम्मान। इसके माध्यम से प्रतिवर्ष दो ऐसी बिभूतियों या संस्थाओं को सम्मानित किया जाता है जो समाज में विभिन्न प्रकार से सेवा के कार्य में लगे हैं और समाज में उस कार्य का प्रतिफल दिखाई देता है। कुछ धनराशि सेवा सम्मान के रूप में दी जाती रही है। वर्तमान वर्ष में रु. दो लाख 51 हजार की धनराशि निश्चित हुई है। वर्ष 1995 में प्रारम्भ किए गए इस प्रकल्प के माध्यम से भारत के प्रत्येक राज्य से किसी एक को सम्मानित करने में न्यास सफल हुआ है। इस वर्ष की योजना में निम्न कार्य-क्षेत्र में कार्यरत दो व्यक्तियों या संस्थाओं को सम्मानित करने का निर्णय हुआ है।

दिव्यांग जन को स्वावलंबी/आत्मनिर्भर बनाना

अर्थात् दिव्यांग जन आत्मनिर्भर बनें उस प्रकार का प्रशिक्षण देने वाले व्यक्ति या संस्था जो यह कार्य सेवार्थ कर रहे हैं।

अतः न्यास आप सभी से आग्रह करता है कि अपने संपर्क के माध्यम से इस कार्य-क्षेत्र से जुड़े सेवा-व्रतियों व संस्थाओं से सम्बंधित विस्तृत विवरण (जैसे - कब शुरू हुआ, हर वर्ष लाभान्वित, अब तक लाभान्वित, आत्मनिर्भर दिव्यांग जनों की संख्या, साहित्य, चित्र आदि) को न्यास को भेजने की कृपा करें। प्रविष्टि भेजने की अंतिम तिथि 15 दिसम्बर 2022 है।

भेजने का पता : **भाऊराव देवरस सेवा न्यास**
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PM Narendra Modi met the injured in the Morbi bridge collapse incident

REALITY VS PROPAGANDA

COLLAPSE OF THE BRITISH-ERA BRIDGE IN MORBI WAS A TRAGEDY. HOWEVER, THE OPPOSITION SHOULD REFRAIN FROM POLITICISING THE DISASTER AS SOME MISCREANTS WERE KICKING THE ROPES AND PREVENTING THOSE STRANDED IN THE BRIDGE FROM EXITING

ANALYSIS

YUVRAJ POKHARNA

Columnist

The collapse of the British-era bridge that was 143-years-old sent shockwaves throughout the country, leaving an estimated 140 people dead and many more injured and traumatised. After being closed for repairs during the celebrations for the Gujarati New Year, the bridge was finally opened to traffic on October 26.

It was estimated that there were between 400 and 500 people on the 765-metre-long suspended cable bridge when it broke apart at 6:40 pm on Sunday evening. The number of people was more than three times the capacity of the bridge. In spite of the warning, a large crowd still gathered on the bridge, and many of the people there began shaking it, which ultimately led to the bridge's collapse. As a direct consequence of this, hundreds of people drowned in the river. According to the administration of the Morbi district, over 140 people were killed in the accident, and according to reports, there is still one person who has been reported missing. Rescue crews are currently searching for this missing person. At the beginning of October 31, Prime Minister Narendra Modi had presided over a high-level conference that was held at Raj Bhavan in Gandhinagar to discuss the situation in Morbi. The conference was held at the same time. At the high-level meeting, in addition to other high-ranking officials, including those from the Home Department of the State and the Gujarat State Disaster Management Authority, Chief Minister

Bhupendra Patel, Minister of State for the Home Harsh Sanghavi, the Chief Secretary of Gujarat, and the Director General of Police of Gujarat were present. Other high-ranking officials from the Gujarat State Disaster Management Authority and the Home Department of the State were also present. Modi also went to see those who were injured and met with their families while he was there.

HEALING TOUCH FOR THE BEREAVED FAMILIES

Following the announcement made by Prime Minister Modi, the PMNRF will make a gratuitous payment of Rs. 2 lakh to the surviving family members and loved ones of those who perished in the Morbi accident. In addition, people who were injured will each receive Rs 50,000 as compensation. Bhupendra Patel, the Chief Minister of Gujarat, has promised a total of Rs. 400,000 to the families of those who were killed and Rs. 50,000 to each person who was injured.

Both President Droupadi Murmu and Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar have offered their condolences at this difficult time.

According to Harsh Sanghvi, the Home Minister of Gujarat, teams from the Fire Department, the State Disaster Response team, and the police rushed to the scene within two to three hours and rescued individuals. The rescue operation team also included the National Disaster Response Force, the Army and the Navy.

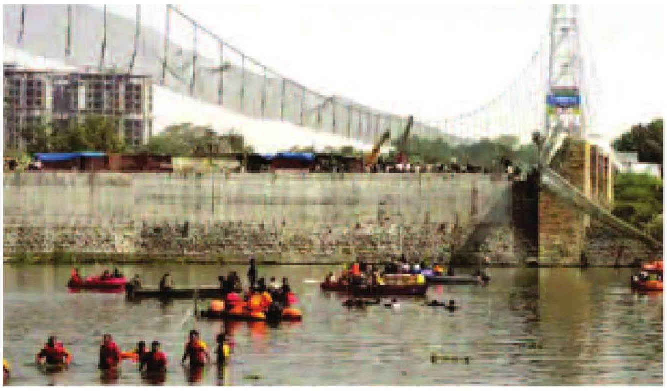
Sanghvi also added that those responsible would be held accountable in a severe manner. A day of mourning was held across the entire State of Gujarat on November 2 in memory of those who perished in the collapse of the Morbi Bridge. In accordance with the provisions of Sections 304, 308, and 114 of the Indian Penal Code, a total of nine people have been taken into custody.

NINE ARRESTED FOR THE BRIDE COLLAPSE

According to Ashok Yadav, the Inspector General of Police in Rajkot, two managers of the Oreva company, two contractors, two ticket clerks, and three security guards are among the nine people who have been arrested in connection with the collapse of the Morbi bridge.

Following its reopening to the general public in advance of Diwali and the Gujarati New Year, the "Julta Pul" was visited by a significant number of tourists over the course of the Diwali holidays.

> IN SPITE OF THE WARNING, A LARGE CROWD STILL GATHERED ON THE BRIDGE, AND MANY OF THE PEOPLE THERE BEGAN SHAKING IT, WHICH ULTIMATELY LED TO THE BRIDGE'S COLLAPSE



Rescuers in boats conducting a search on the Machchu river next to the bridge that collapsed in Morbi

> ANOTHER VIDEO FROM PM MODI'S RECENT RALLY SHOWING A MAN ATTEMPTING TO DAMAGE THE PANDAL IN ORDER TO ALLEGEDLY CAUSE CASUALTIES WENT VIRAL, IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO RULE OUT THE POSSIBILITY THAT THERE WAS A CONSPIRACY

According to a video that has gone viral, many people can be seen vigorously moving the ropes, which was normal for the bridge. However, many eyewitnesses reported that these individuals were kicking the ropes specifically and preventing people from exiting the bridge. When taken together with the fact that another video from PM Modi's rally showing a man attempting to damage the pandal in order to allegedly cause casualties went viral, it is impossible to rule out the possibility that there was a conspiracy.

The Oreva group has been singled out in some reports as being responsible for the tragedy that occurred. Nevertheless, it is important to note that the Oreva group undertook the renovation activity as part of its corporate social responsibility initiative (CSR), despite the fact that the company does not engage in this kind of business. In addition to this, the Oreva group had handed over operation and renovation responsibilities for the project to a separate party. By law, India's largest businesses are required to donate at least 2 per cent of the cumulative net profits they've accumulated over the course of the previous three years to charitable organisations.

During the time that the relevant authorities are investigating the tragic accident, the Government needs to reevaluate its CSR activities, and it should make every effort to prevent the issue from becoming politicised. ■

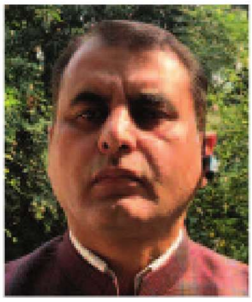
DIGITAL ASHVAMEDHA OF

UPI HAS BEEN THE BEST THING TO HAPPEN TO THE NATION. EVEN SMALL-TIME MERCHANTS/VENDORS HAVE BENEFITED FROM IT. BHARAT, THE LAND OF SANĀTANA DHARMA, NOW URGES G20 MEMBERS TO BROADEN THEIR HORIZON FROM CROSS-BORDER ELECTRONIC COMMERCE TO ELECTRONIC COOPERATION

PhonePe
BHIM UPI
Roll-on

UPI is an instant real-time payment system which facilitates inter-bank peer-to-peer (P2P) transactions. It has played a key role in the country making a transition to a cashless economy. Payment through UPI crossed a milestone of Rs 11 lakh crore in September, as per the data released by the National Payments Corporation of India

ANALYSIS



PRASOON SHARMA

Founder & CEO of WUS, a unified digital community for workers and Pentland-Churchill fellow for Global Public Policy leadership at NYU

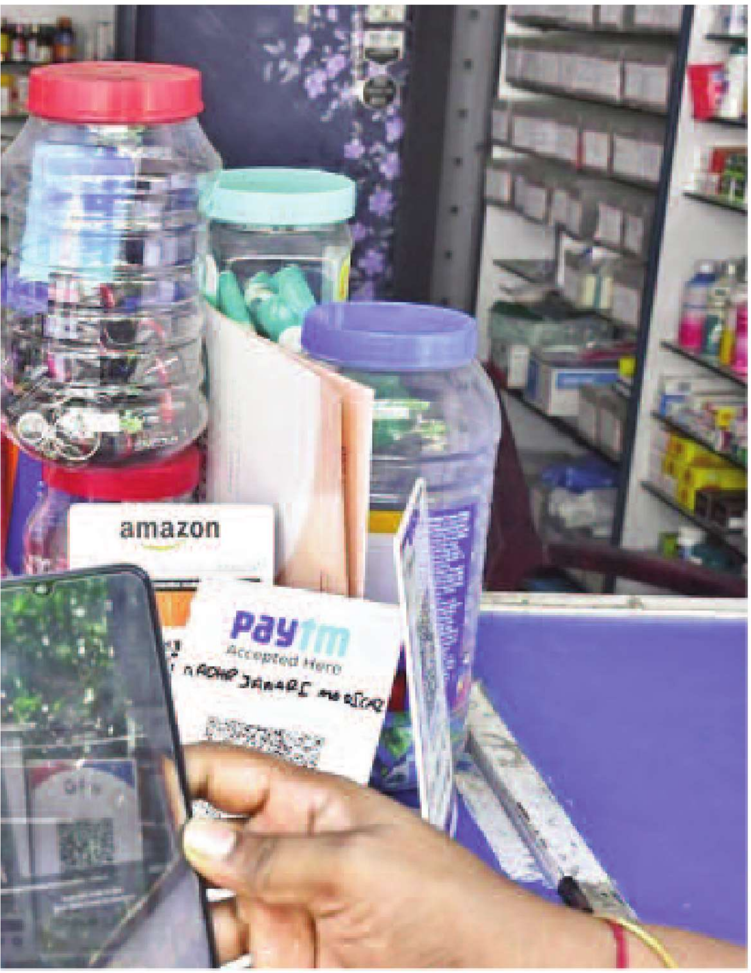
The Sanatan way tells us: "The natural and eternal way to live is to cooperate for the common human good." E-cooperation, not just E-commerce Cut to 2022. Bharat is following the Sanatan principle. "India leads the world in real-time digital payments by clocking almost 40 per cent of all such transactions," said Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi.

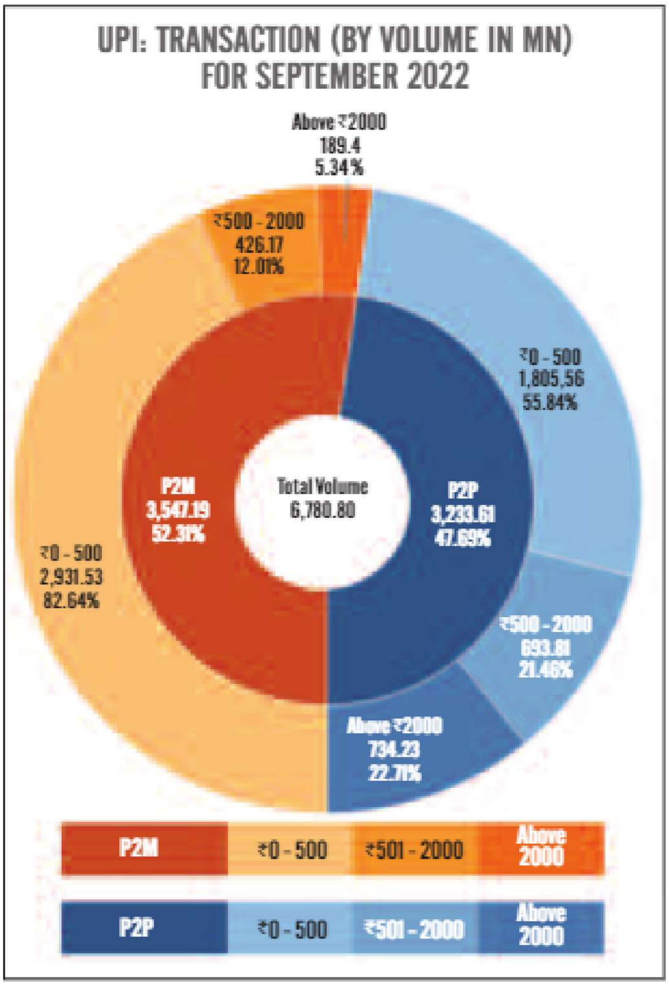
With more than 48 billion digital transactions, Bharat led the global list in 2021. Bharat did almost three times more transactions than China, which is second by completing 18 billion transactions, and 6.5 times more than the transactions done by the United States, Canada and the United Kingdom.

Last month, the UPI was used for over 6.7 billion transactions in the world's second-largest internet market. Fifty two per cent of these transactions were P2M payments done by a person to a merchant. Eighty two per cent of P2M payments were under Rs 500. Thus, UPI is a payment tool for ordinary Indians for their regular payments.

A BCG report predicts that the e-payments market in India will increase by

BHARAT





three times and be worth up to $10 trillion in the next five years and nearly 65 per cent of all payments will be e-payments.

Importantly, Bharat's UPI is the number one digital payment interface with a Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) of 160 per cent. As of July 2022, 338 banks integrated UPI with their digital platform. Due to this unprecedented growth and global expansion, UPI is leading the global payment domain. It has eased up the payment process and facilitated the evolution of other businesses.

STARTUP-20 UNDER INDIA'S G-20 PRESIDENCY

Bharat proposed a new group at the G-20 level for startups. Bharat called for G-20 countries to adopt open source and inter-operable platforms like UPI and Aadhaar to promote inclusive digitisation across the world. Of the 21 billion-dollar startups in the fintech space, nine are payments unicorns, and all have integrated UPI solutions for a seamless checkout experience across platforms. Among these are companies like Razorpay, CRED, PhonePe, Pine Labs and Paytm. However, PhonePe led the UPI space with a 47.7% market share in July 2022 and processed transactions worth Rs 5.24 lakh crore.

One problem with UPI is that it is inaccessible to foreigners travelling to India. During the G20 presidency, Bharat should launch UPI services for foreigners travelling in India.

Recently considering UPI's success, Fortune magazine stated: "As Silicon Valley fantasizes about Web3.0, India leaps ahead on payments". UPI is doing specifically what blockchain is invented to do by cutting out mediators, and by creating (for now, at least) a payment instrument free of transaction fees, it has attracted 260 million unique

> **GIVEN THE IDEA BEHIND THE PUBLIC GOOD POLICY, UPI SERVICES ARE CURRENTLY FREE FOR CUSTOMERS AND MERCHANTS. HOWEVER, BANKS AND PAYMENT SERVICE PROVIDERS/THIRD-PARTY ADMINS LIKE PHONEPE AND GOOGLE PAY ARE STRUGGLING TO COPE WITH COSTS INCURRED IN THE ZERO-MDR (MERCHANT DISCOUNT RATE) REGIME AS MERCHANTS ARE NO LONGER PAYING THEM THE SERVICE CHARGE**

users and 50 million merchants in India alone.

UPI, one of the most successful digital public goods (DPG), is the best thing to happen to Bharat where the fruits of innovation have primarily eluded the masses. But it is not so this time. Even the most small-time merchants/vendors have adopted UPI and benefited. For both buyers and sellers, the outcome has guaranteed a smooth and inclusive payments ecosystem without the chaos and hassles of plastic money. The only glitch? Nobody is ready to pay for the newfound convenience.

Given the idea behind the public good policy, UPI services are currently free for customers and merchants. However, banks and payment service providers/third-party admins like PhonePe and Google Pay are struggling to cope with costs incurred in the zero-MDR (merchant discount rate) regime as merchants are no longer paying them the service charge.

Although the Government has been compensating the banks on an ad-hoc basis, all non-banking PSPs/fintech startups in this space rue the lack of a sustainable revenue model as they have no other income to cover their costs.

Effective January 2020, the MDR issue has been a thorn in the flesh for all TPA/PSP stakeholders. According to a Mint report, the industry is estimated to lose Rs 5,500 crores from UPI and RuPay MDR made zero.

As per sources, "Last year, the Government gave Rs 1,300 crores to banks for UPI txns. So each taxpayer paid Rs 600 approx for UPI to already profitable banks. TPAs like PhonePe, Google Pay and the like made nothing. While Paytm Bank gets some incentive from the Government on UPI, Paytm as a TPA can unlock Rs 800 crores annual revenues from UPI MDR. Guess what that can do to its stock price." The newest Reserve Bank of India's initiative to link UPI with credit cards will also have growth implications. To begin with, customers will have a wider choice of payments, and big-ticket purchases will rise now. Second, MDR will be back for all credit cards, including RuPay. The rate has been fixed at 2 per cent of the transaction size, barring small merchants with a turnover of up to Rs 20 lakh. Of this, 1.5 per cent will go to the card-issuing bank as an interchange, and the rest will be split as fees among RuPay (or other networks when they come in) and all acquiring entities.

In the last five years, the Digital India programme has driven rapid technology implementation in the country. Some of the top digital technologies supported programmes that have engaged huge space in the e-governance model include Aadhaar expansion, Direct Benefit Transfer, Common Services Centers, DigiLocker, mobile-based UMANG services, participatory governance through-MyGov and Jeevan-Pramaan. Not only UPI, but Bharat also has a boutique of offerings for social good.

SANATANA WAY: E-COOPERATION FOR SOCIAL GOOD

Our existence is under threat, the challenges like climate change killing people across borders, but we are so ignorant that we are busy negotiating petty benefits. By 2030, we need 50 per cent more food, 45 per cent more energy, 50 per cent reduction in CO2 emissions to survive (Labs, Feb 2018). However, with the current fragmented and narrow-minded approach, we are not ready to save our planet. The scale and pace of these global challenges like climate change is a matter of great concern. To speed up the implementation and delivery of a sustainable development goal to solve these existential threats, cross-border electronic cooperation can play an important role.

The WTO members should reduce all kinds of barriers to achieving the SDGs by at least 50 per cent by 2030. Existence should be given preference over economics. For countries and SDG below 50 score, there should be some consideration while WTO members negotiate e-commerce policy framework.

E-cooperation should bring special provisions for natural calamities, emergencies and eradicating life-threatening diseases like COVID-19. Example. Gates Foundation is aggressively working to eliminate malaria from the planet. For such NGOs, initiatives should have special provisions in the e-commerce framework with no or minimum barriers.

Thus Bharat, the land of Sanātana Dharma, urges G20 members to broaden their horizon from cross-border electronic commerce to electronic cooperation. ■

SIGNIFICANCE OF SWATVA

THE WEST GAVE UP ITS SWATVA AND IS NOW FACING CONSEQUENCES. FORTUNATELY, BHARAT, WHICH WAS SUBJUGATED BY FOREIGNERS FOR LONG, IS STILL HOLDING ON TO ITS SWATVA

The ancient Hindu system remains strong and resilient

OPINION

SIDDHARTHA RASTOGI

Managing Director & Chief Operating Officer in Asset Management Arm of a Leading Full Service Investment Bank

How are alliances formed between nations? Are they based upon common opportunity, landmass, or value systems? Why are tools, and technology of the 21st century that were supposed to bring stability create an even more unstable world?

What's the solution to World's Woes? Oh! Apologies only to the Woes of Lesser halves comprising3.4 billion people of 7.9 billion.

Take a look at some headlines published in various journals, online news platforms, that reflect the reality of the day.

Desperate for water: European drought crisis in pictures – Euronews.com, August 2022

The Great European Energy Crisis Is Now Coming for Your Food – Bloomberg.com, August 2022

Europeans won't escape their energy crisis as long as ideology trumps basic maths - foreignpolicy.com, September 2022

Water scarcity: EU countries forced to restrict drinking water access – dw.com, July 2022

More than 2m adults in UK cannot afford to eat every day, survey finds - theguardian.com, May 2022

What's been witnessed by the West is a phenomenon that is not only specific to a region or a section or a sect of society but is prevalent and impacting large swathes of the population across the planet. Millions sleep without food every day, scarcity, shortage of drinking water, and a forthcoming extreme winter with no warmth and no power.

IS THIS WHAT THE WORLD IS STARING AT?

For few who may be thinking that this is a common phenomenon in the so-called developing world, impoverished world, or Third World, they are wrong, deadly wrong. The challenges of being chained in one's

UNLIKE THE WEST, BHARAT TOOK A DIFFERENT PATH. BHARAT ALSO INCREASED ITS FISCAL DEFICIT, WHICH MEANS BORROWING INCREMENTAL MONEY BUT INSTEAD OF DOLLING CASH HANDOUTS, MONEY WAS SPENT ON BUILDING AATMANIRBHAR BHARAT — MADE IN INDIA. BUILDING THINGS AND GOODS FOR INDIA IN INDIA AND FOR THE WORLD

excesses and hypocrisy are bumping this time around to the so-called developed world, the privileged world. (What is the Developed World? The developed world, which certifies itself to be developed) Humans around the world need three essentials for subsistence: Water, Food, and energy (Energy for Wi-Fi to stay connected and heating against extreme weather).

Forget having all three, getting hold of even one or two from the three seems to be a challenge. The situation is so grave that the Berlin Cathedral or Berliner Dom, the monument of significance, the monument of belief, the monument of historic relevance is no longer being illuminated to save energy. What went wrong with the West that was prospering till the last century or even in the last decade, at least prosperity was perceived optically. Some believe that it has to do with an ageing population, some believe it has to do with war, the Russian and the Ukrainian conflict and some believe that it has to do with the burgeoning debt of the EU.

THE ENERGY CRISIS

The next ten statements will bring a perspective!

- Russian economy Is smaller than the top 3 state economies of the US in terms of size
- Europe produces 3.6 million barrels of oil daily & uses 15 million barrels of oil daily
- Europe produces 230 billion cubic metres of natural gas a year but uses 560 billion cubic metres
- Europe uses 950 million tons of coal a year but produces 450 million tonnes of coal a year
- Russia produces 11 million barrels of oil per day but uses 3.4 million
- Russia produces 700 + billion cubic metres of gas a year but only uses around 400 billion
- Russia mines 800 million tons of coal each year and uses 300 million tonnes
- Russia supplies 20 per cent of Europe's oil, 40 per cent of its gas, and 20 per cent of its coal
- In 2016, Russia supplied 30 per cent of natural gas to Europe
- In 2021, Russia supplied 47 per cent of natural gas to Europe
- Germany had 30 per cent of its energy supplies from nuclear a few years back and at present is 10 per cent

(Data as on Dec 31 2021)

The above facts clearly show how under the pressure of Left liberals, green warriors, and activists, Europe lost its ability to control the energy resources and got dependent on Russia.

THE FOOD CRISIS

Ukraine has been a bread box for Europe and Africa and the war has accentuated the problems of food. The fertiliser used for agriculture production that was supplied by Russia also was paused. A recent report published in May 2022, by the World Wide Fund (WWF) stated that despite being the world's largest exporter of agri-food products in value terms, Europe has a mammoth trade deficit when the context of measurement is in nutritional terms, such as calories and proteins. It's interesting that the EU imports nearly twice as much seafood as it produces, to fulfil its need for protein. With inflation surging, the economy visibly slowing down, and food & fuel prices rising, Europe is hanging on a thin thread as far as food security is concerned.

Another challenge that is hitting the EU is the shift toward the Electric Vehicle. At this juncture, almost all Electric Vehicles use lithium Ion batteries. Unfortunately the largest quantum of lithium - 78 per cent - comes from Chile and residual from the United States. Chile, the largest producer of Lithium, has a massive water shortage and groundwater contamination on account of lithium mining.

THE SOLVE & THE RESOLVE

Why was once a strong Europe, controlling nearly two thirds of the world is now going under? The answer lies in selling its own Swatva.

What is meant by Swatva? Swatva means innateness of self. Swatva is made from two words – Swa and Tva . Swa means self. Tva means one's elements. Unfortunately, there is no equivalent word in English that describes Swatva. In a simplistic explanation, Swatva means being in a condition of self-existence and self-determination. It's very close to being Swatantra (freedom) not only physically but emotionally as well. One having a sense of self-determination.The West under the various gimmicks gave up its Swatva and is now facing the consequences.

However Bharat, despite being subjugated for over 200 years by foreigners, didn't leave its Swatva. Hence Bharat slowly yet steadily over three fourth of the century came back to lead the world and show the path of collective well-being. Bharat faced multiple catastrophes yet converted most into an opportunity with the sole aim to protect its soul, protect its Swatva.

WHAT THE WEST CAN LEARN FROM BHARAT?

Systems & Culture of Bharat: The ancient Hindu system that was created over 5,000 years ago remains strong and resilient. The same gave strength then and continues to give strength today. The list of systems is long and thus will quote only two of them.

Travel: Globally leisure travel constitutes nearly 80 per cent, whilst in India, 70 per cent of tourism is spiritual and Dharmic tourism and is pursued by all sects, segments, classes, and socio-economic strata throughout the year. Thus keeping the money flow and income flow through the year irrespective of recession or boom Leisure travel is dependent on external factors like income, markets, geo-political situation, and climate however spiritual travel as stated above cares for none and is pursued every year irrespective of any external conditions. This creates economic resilience for the country.

When COVID-19 struck, the West including Western Europe, the US, and the UK Governments were engaged in taking further debt on their balance sheets and disbursing free money and monetary incentives to induce demand. The logic was to bring the interest costs to zero, and let Governments borrow more money at zero or negative or near zero rates. Flush this money to drive demand and keep businesses going, keeping employment, earnings, and income levels high. As earnings of both households and the private sector will first sustain and then grow, the tax revenues will significantly jump after seeing a slight dip.

BUILDING AATMANIRBHAR BHARAT

Unlike the West, Bharat took a different path. Bharat also increased its fiscal deficit, which means borrowing incremental money but instead of dolling cash handouts, money was spent on building AatmaNirbhar Bharat — Made in India. Building things and goods for India in India and for the world. The first step was to replace imports with things and goods assembled in India and then manufactured in India. But the challenge was that the Government can't manufacture using public funds as running businesses. This is not the core activity of the government. Also when there is uncertainty, unpredictability, and ambiguity which was the case during covid, private capital goes back home and stays safe. To increase private participation, the Government of India (GOI) came up with a series of incentives for the private sector to open purses, remove fear and make for the World. GOI realised that a small nudge at the right time can propel people to act. Performance-linked incentive schemes (PLI) were introduced across 10 core sectors which were then increased to 14 sectors providing the right set of motivation for private capital to proceed with Make in India and putting India on the manufacturing map of the World.

Further initiatives like National Master Plan for Multi-modal Connectivity, and National Single Window System providing end-to-end facilitation, and support have fixed the challenges on the manufacturing side, nudging India to get on the fast track of Make in India, Make for India and Make for World. One has already seen that some of these initiatives have fructified into unrivalled success. For example, India has moved up the ladder to emerge as the second largest mobile phone manufacturer, as well as the largest two-wheeler manufacturer in the world.

During the pandemic when demand was suppressed, Bharat chose to build and expand its infrastructure boosting its spending on infra. Roads, bridges and highways were built in record time at record speed and they continue to be built even after the pandemic was over. Infra spend benefits all sectors and the monies spent by the government reach the last man standing creating a multiplier effect.

One quote from Manusmriti sums up the entire thinking and thought process with which Bharat is progressing. It's captured in Chapter 4, Verse 160. And it states. (Words in Sanskrit)

सर्वं परवशं दुःखं सर्वमात्मवशं सुखम् ।
एतद् विद्यात् समासेन लक्षणं सुखदुःखयोः क ।।

Meaning: All that is dependent on others is painful; all that is dependent on oneself is pleasing; he shall know this to be, in short, the definition of pleasure and pain. Sanatan Dharma always believes what holds good for inner happiness, holds good for life, what holds good for life, holds good for the economy, what holds good for the economy, holds well for the nations, ultimately it's all one.

(Views, opinions, comments and statements expressed in this article are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the official view or position of any company or sister concerns or group company where the author is presently employed)

The report has deliberately ignored the Modi Government's efforts to ensure food security for the people of Bharat

HUNGER FOR FRAUD

A REPORT "GLOBAL HUNGER INDEX-2022" HAS SHOWN FALSE FIGURES. CLEARLY, THE ATTEMPT IS TO PORTRAY BHARAT AS A NATION THAT IS UNABLE TO PROVIDE FOOD SECURITY

ANALYSIS

DR NIVEDITA SHARMA

Member of the Madhya Pradesh Commission for Protection of Child Rights

There is a bad condition of starvation in India. The people of India are suffering from hunger. Here the condition of food production and its distribution are so bad that the people of the country are not getting food and are dying of hunger. This is what the "Global Hunger Index-2022" is telling. But are these conditions a reality or to defame India?

INDIA SUPPLIED FOODGRAINS TO SRI LANKA

The first thought that comes to mind after reading this full report is, out of all the conspiracies that are being propagated to reduce the glory of India becoming the most powerful nation in the world, this is clearly visible. It is heartbreaking to read the entire report to see how international agencies are falling prey to a particular narrative and are losing credibility. The agencies which released this report are non-government organisations 'Welthungerhilfe' of Germany and 'Concern Worldwide' of Ireland. Both of them did not bother to pay any attention to the fact that in Sri Lanka where people were not getting two rotis in a day, India supplied that country not only with food grains but also all the items related to daily life, which are essential for human life.

Similarly, in Pakistan, the cost of one kg of flour is generally Rs 110 and in a city like Karachi, it has become Rs 125 per kg. Wheat is being sold at the rate of Rs 88 to Rs 105 per kg. That country has also been put ahead of India in this hunger calculation report. Not only this, Bangladesh, Myanmar and Nepal are also in a better position than India according to this report. Report says that compared to their previous report, India has dropped down to number six.

In the list of 121 countries, Pakistan is ranked 99th, Sri Lanka 64th, Bangladesh 84th, Nepal 81st and Myanmar 71st, while India's rank is 107th. The report states that

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

India's score of 29.1 in the 2022 Global Hunger Index falls under the "serios" category in the hunger meter. It ranked 107 out of the 121 countries analysed below Rwanda and Ethiopia

29.1

=<9.9 low	10-19.9 Moderate	20-34.9 Serious	35-49.9 Alarming	>=50 Extremely Alarming

Rankings	Country
Sri Lanka	64
Myanmar	71
Nepal	81
Bangladesh	84
Pakistan	99
Rwanda	102
Nigeria	103

Rankings	Country
Ethiopia	104
Republic of Kongo	105
Sudan	106
Bharat	107
Zambia	108
Afghanistan	109
Timor-Leste	110

South Asia, the region with the highest hunger levels in the world, has the highest child stunting rate and it is 19.3 per cent in India, which is the highest in any country in the world.

The prevalence of malnutrition in India has increased from 14.6 per cent in 2018-2020 to 16.3 in 2019-2021. This means that out of the total 828 million people around the world, 22.43 million people in India are undernourished. "Child stunting", the biggest indicator of mortality among children under the age of five, has also worsened. It has increased from 15.1 per cent in 2012-16 to 19.3 per cent in 2017-21.

According to the report, India is also included in 21 countries where the problem of hunger is considered very serious. So much so that India is 25 places below Nepal and seven places below Pakistan. India's GSI score is 29.1, which falls in the severe category.

At present, those who are trying to surround the Central Government on the basis of this "Global Hunger Index-2022" or are trying to call India weak, should first introspect why this report deliberately ignores the efforts made by the Government to ensure food security for the population? The report also makes a mockery of the IMF report which clearly congratulated the Indian Government for eradicating poverty. .The Hunger Index appears to be measuring facts incorrectly. Because out of the four indicators used to calculate the index, three are related to the health of children which may not represent the entire population. The fourth and most important indicator of the proportion of the undernourished (POU) population is estimated based on an opinion poll conducted on a very small sample size of three thousand. In which there is no mention of ensuring food security for the population, especially during the COVID-19 epidemic.

Taking a wild guess, the report depicts malnourishment which is completely wrong. Because the population of India is currently 1,404,234,872 (140 crores). 18 out of every 100 people in the world live in India. Then the samples should have been 1,40,00000 (10 per cent of population as per

‘MISINFORMATION IS THE HALLMARK OF GLOBAL HUNGER INDEX’

The Indian Government on October 15 rubbished the Global Hunger Report 2022 saying it has an erroneous measure of hunger and suffers from serious methodological issues.

“Misinformation seems to be the hallmark of the annually released Global Hunger Index,” read a statement released by the Indian government after Global Hunger Report 2022 placed India on 107, below neighbouring countries Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Nepal, and Bangladesh.

“The index is an erroneous measure of hunger and suffers from serious methodological issues. Three out of the four indicators used for the calculation of the index are related to the health of Children and cannot be representative of the entire population. The fourth and most important indicator estimate of the Proportion of Undernourished (PoU) population is based on an opinion poll conducted on a very small sample size of 3000,” the statement further added.

The statement also said that the Global Hunger Index Report is not only disconnected from reality but has also deliberately ignored efforts undertaken by the Government to ensure food Security for the population, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic.

“Taking a one-dimensional view, the report lowers India’s rank based on the estimate of the Proportion of the Undernourished (PoU) population for India at 16.3 per cent. The FAO estimate is based on the “Food Insecurity Experience Scale (FIES)” Survey Module conducted through Gallop World Poll, which is an “opinion poll” based on “8 questions” with a sample size of ‘3000 respondents’,” the statement said.

The Government said the data used to arrive at the rating drawn from a narrow sample for a country of India’s size and through dubious methods is not only wrong & unethical, but it also reeks of obvious bias. It also accused the Concern Worldwide and Welt Hunger Hilfe, the publishing agencies of the Global Hunger Report, of not having done their due diligence before releasing the report. The Central Government highlighted the prejudice and erroneous method used by the agency, pointing out how irrelevant, and questions not searching for factual responses were used in the survey to arrive at the Hunger Index.

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rules of good research) collected keeping in mind such a large population in that situation, which was not done at all while preparing his report. The understanding here is that an attempt has been made to portray India as a nation that is not able to provide the food security and nutritional needs of its population. Whereas, seeing the current conditions of the country with a growing economy that has progressed to become the fifth largest economy in the world, so it is glaring that this report is not credible from any angle.

The fallacy of this report is also understandable that in Asia, only Afghanistan is behind India and it is at 109th place! In the end, after analysing the facts deeply, it will be said that the figures shown in the context of India in the “Global Hunger Index-2022” are false. There is a well-planned attempt to defame India at the international level. It seems that this report is to appease the anti-India lobby and are unable to bear India's growing global power. Some organisations and nations are not able to bear the growing international role of India. A new image of India is visible globally full of development and prosperity. This is a malicious attempt to divert everyone's attention from the growth of India and set a negative narrative by giving a false report , because if this was not true, then in that case everyone would assume that India could never have been placed below Pakistan and Sri Lanka in this report. Rather it should be said that many countries of the world and SAARC countries, in comparison with which India is ahead in many ways, which is not mentioned in this report. I expected these NGOs to work better with appropriate sample and research methodology. ■

> **THERE IS A WELL-PLANNED ATTEMPT TO DEFAME INDIA AT THE INTERNATIONAL LEVEL. IT SEEMS THAT THIS REPORT IS TO APPEASE THE ANTI-INDIA LOBBY AND ARE UNABLE TO BEAR INDIA'S GROWING GLOBAL POWER. SOME ORGANISATIONS AND NATIONS ARE NOT ABLE TO BEAR THE GROWING INTERNATIONAL ROLE OF INDIA. A NEW IMAGE OF INDIA IS VISIBLE GLOBALLY FULL OF DEVELOPMENT AND PROSPERITY**

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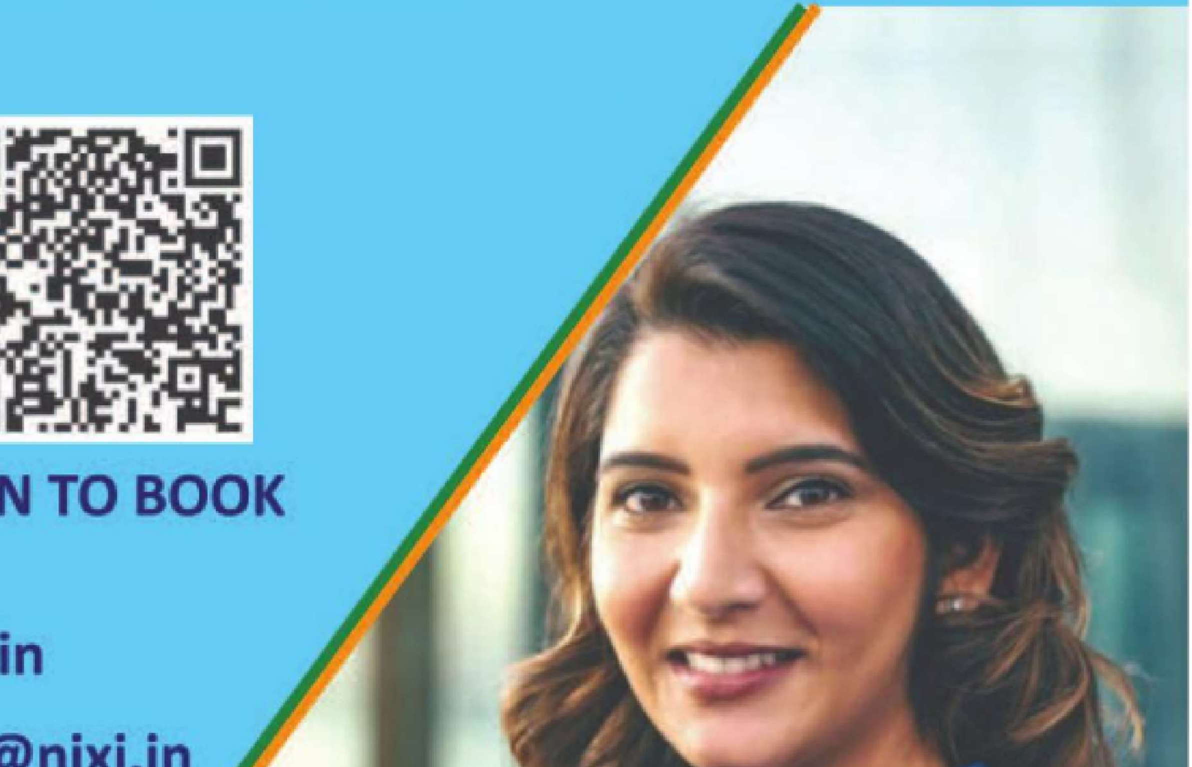

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Empowering Netizens

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"FOR US XI JINPING'S FINAL RESOLUTION IS NOTHING BUT MASSACRE OF UYGHURS"

Based in faraway Australia, Nurgul Sawut's heart lies with her aggrieved community - Uyghurs in China. As Executive Chairperson of Uyghur Freedom Forum (Australia), Nurgul Sawut, an outspoken and bitter opponent of China's draconian policy to subjugate rights of minorities and members of her community, has narrated the systematic human rights violation orchestrated by the Communist regime that is spreading the canard to the West that Uyghurs are like the Islamic fundamentalists. In her report "Human Rights Situation In East Turkistan ('Xinjiang') Under Chinese Occupation", **Nurgul Sawut** urges readers to condemn the genocidal policies being undertaken in China. She explains nerve wracking ordeal like how the Xi Jinping regime is committing atrocities like imprisoning Uyghurs in large-scale detention camps, in an insightful interview with **Organiser Editor Prafulla Ketkar**. Excerpts

- **What is the situation of Uyghurs in the Chiese territory, and why did you decide to move from your homeland in 2000?**

For many young and aspirational people, who are seeking Freedom of Speech and other kinds of freedom, there's no way they can remain inside. The moment when they make a dialogue or deliver a speech, they are expressing their personal views on a particular subject related to social injustice, unfair treatment of Uyghur people, they will be picked up and either put behind bars or blacklisted in severe cases. And for me, even though I was working in the Government sector as a youth, I was constantly reading and continuously observing what all was happening in the society. So, there were many ways I could see my limitations. I see the potential risk if I'm expressing myself to the Government or to society. That's why I decided to pursue a new life and decided to leave my homeland. Many of my friends at that time, who were in the same stream, undertaking the same way of writing, having an unrestrained dialogue, and have all been arrested. And none of them is working where they should work.

- **Under Xi Jinping's leadership CCP is talking about final solution now?**

If you think how long it took PLA to invade our territory on October 20, 1949, the statistics speak for themself. Forty thousand people were killed at one go. All of them were dubbed as illegal people. And he (Xi Jinping) followed the famous words of Mao when he reportedly said that most resistant people should be wiped out. After six decades, we're facing precisely the same thing. In 2014, China had decided to introduce a second generation, so-called Ethnic Minority Policy, which pretty much took away whatever it had promised for minorities especially to the so-called Uyghur Autonomous Region. We don't have Fundamental Rights under that huge umbrella of autonomous rights, like language, our own way of living, and being part of society. Their systematic approach was to destroy our society. The first attempt was to change our way of living. Then our intellectuals and elders were targeted. All our intellectuals have been arrested, and we have lost 432 scientists, writers, intellectuals, and other professionals.

- **According to the official Chinese position they have only patriotic schooling and a unification process. What is the actual reality on the ground?**

That's where everyone gets confused. The way China actually promoted what we call disinformation campaign comes flooding all day, like a crime against humanity. We never claim that we don't work. We never claim that we don't want to be part of society. Of course, we want to. But the way China wants to do things, it has no intention to bring our community together with the rest of the Han Chinese community. It is not interested in bringing our community into the mainstream of society. It's all about one nation. And we all know what's meant by one nation; when it happened in history it's happening again. China's model being promoted actively is nothing but ultra-nationalism. When I say Han Chinese in a CCP style, For the majority of Han Chinese in mainland China a whitewash is taking place. So, they want to merge and hold the process into a whitewashed mainstream. In doing so, Xi Jinping comes up with some brilliant ideas called Final Resolution which as far as we're concerned since 2006, is a massacre. We have over thousands of camps right across our region. We have over 3 million people kept in these camps. And those are people who are constantly exposed to either torture or slave labour, or in some cases are subjected to organ harvesting. And we don't exactly know the death toll. There's a clear indication that they are being subjected to biological experiments. One can see the difference before they are put behind the bars and after they are released. These training camps are actually concentration camps in which large number of females are exposed to sexual abuse and torture.

> “The first attempt was to change our way of living. And then all our intellectuals have been arrested, and we have lost 432 scientists, writers, intellectuals, and other professionals”

Legally in China, retirement is at the age of 65, why would you take someone who's aged 70 into the camp? So, those kinds of evidence don't justify what China is trying to tell to the outside world. We have to remember that there's another system established around those camps, factories, and now we have an internationally well known banning force, where labourers produce goods for a Western democratic country. In some ways, India has participated and made notes of it, but a lot of work needs to be done.

So, for me as an activist, community leader, as well as the Executive Chair of the Uyghur Freedom Forum, we need to find a new way of handling our crisis and defeat them in the UN Human Rights Council.

- **China claimed in the 20th Congress party that all ethnic minorities are represented in the standing Council , and delegates. What is your take on this?**

We have representatives of 55 ethnicities right across China and if you even look at the committee representative, and compare them to previous Congress, this time the number has actually dropped. That's a significant first signal that China is not keeping up with its own commitment.

> In the name of zero Covid policy, there is a lockdown, where people are staying inside houses. Yet tourists are allowed to run their business from outside, people are still visiting tourist attractions

Secondly, what's happening on the ground within our community, yes, there's a whitewash happening. There's a group of people, actually well trained by Chinese authority, who are representing our speaking style, using CCPs words in the international media and platforms, trying to defend what China is doing. But that doesn't mean by actually covering up what's happening, on the ground. People are becoming smart We from outside are watching, observing, and have a constant eye on things. Even Han Chinese have managed to speak up. If you look at what happened in Beijing just before the Party Congress - that banner on the bridge clearly indicted Xi himself and that's the sign of how much unrest, resentment is their among the public. The main reason is, in the name of zero Covid policy, there is a lockdown, where people are staying inside houses. Yet tourists are allowed to run their business from outside, people are still visiting tourist attractions. What does that mean?

That is why, people are not afraid to put up things online at the moment because there's not enough food. They are not receiving enough medical support. And even women, giving births, are dying. The children are the hardest hit, because they are not having enough nutrition as well as enough vegetable balanced nutrients. Now, in the last eight or nine weeks, we have come up with digital protests. So, people wherever they are put up a little mimic clip, use TikTok or Weibo, one of those major Chinese social media platforms, which are censored quickly.

- What is the status of population composition there. China is claiming that everything is fine on the ground.

The data we have is unreliable as the report is based on what the Chinese Government put on their websites. Dr Adrian Zenz pulled out all this data and forensically looked into tit. He identified the comparison between 2015 and 2018. There's a huge fluctuation in the birth rates amongst the Uyghur people. In areas like, we have 97 per cent of the Uyghur population, yet in some counties in these prefectures the birth rate has dropped to 90 per cent within three years. I don't think the number quoted of 11 to 12 million is right. I still remember Victor Gao, the former adviser to Deng Xiaoping, who was brave enough to open his mouth and claimed the Uyghur population of 7.9 million. He's not an average person. Now I don't know it is the actual number or it was the target.

- Chinese official claim that people like you are leading it from outside China and it is similar to the so-called separatist terrorist movement or Islamic fundamentalist movement.

This is what China is trying to sell to the international community after 9/11. I'm not afraid if China calls me a separatist. You took away my land, my rights and now I'm fighting back and taking them back. You gave me only two options, either live or die. So, for that reason, if you call me separatist, I accept it. But if you are trying to blackmail me, no you cannot, and I can communicate with the outside world, no one can stop me. So, China, you can tell your side of the story, I can tell my side of the story. Let the public decide, hear out, and decide who's actually telling the truth.

We work so hard and diligently and are working on our own Constitution for a long time, and rewiring, retweaking. It's not like what China claimed to be Islamic extremists, separatists. So our Constitution is a democratic. And yes, we say that our religion is Islam, but we will give equal opportunity to all the non-Islamic people that will be the crux of our Constitution. Yes, Uyghurs will be the spinal cord of the society, but we have Kazak, Kirghiz, Tajiks. We have never conflicted with them. And we always know how to come together when we need it.

- **How many Uyghur activists are associated with your forum?**

We are working in different areas like human rights, education, cultural revival, linguistics. We are fighting for our own dignity and freedom, and if you merge all of them, we have over 150 organisations. When it comes to genocide, we all stand together. If we focus on Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Europe, North America, and Oceania, we have about 2 million people.

- **China describes Uyghur as Xinjiang, while you call it Turkistan. When you talk about a separate homeland or freedom, what is the idea behind it?**

When we talk about the sovereignty of freedom and sovereignty of our land, we only refer to the land taken over by CCP, since October 21, 1949. We're not talking about the Uyghur population living in Kazakhstan or the former USSR territory which is a different issue.

- **There are 55 Islamic countries who stand with China and are not paying any heed to the atrocities on Uyghurs.**

When China was in the WTO, the whole idea was if China's economy opens up, they will start adopting democracy but that was a big mistake. After 25 years, we've seen the so-called China model. They have merged capitalism with a planned economy. We don't know how exactly they are executing their plans, what we are seeing is pretty much the ultra-nationalist basis.

For the Islamic countries, China is controlling the manufacturing supply chain. 9/11 was an another turning point. In the anti-terrorism campaign, Uyghurs were described as terrorists. Using these two issues, China introduced Belt and Road Initiative, of which Chine Pakistan Economic Corridor is an important component. If you abserve the recent financial change, Pakistan may end up like Sri Lanka, full of debt. Besides that, the BRI and the supply chain of China has influenced and bought out a lot of political power in the Islamic world.

Recently, the entire Islamic world erupted for one copy of Quran was burnt in Norway. How many Quran's are burnt in our homeland? Tons of 1000s. They have been taking out the Holy Quran, burning it, throwing it in the toilet and no one utters a word. All our praying mats, Islamic decorations inside the houses are all pulled out. Even if you look at it when you pray, you are supposed to face west, it's the corner of the house, guess what's in the eastern corner of the house in each household now? Xi Jinping's photo. So, if you pray, you end up praying towards Xi. This is like a religious uprooting, and as well as cleansing, and yet the Islamic world is silent. And besides that, China is very much manipulative and so-called smart enough to present those major mosques still it's there as a part of their creation presenting to those Islamic world that Uyghurs go to mosque, we still giving them access to all the things but if you notice, no one goes into their mosque pray.

> The entire Islamic world erupted for one copy of Quran was burnt. How many crowns are burnt in our homeland? Tons of 1000s. They (Chinese soldiers) took out the Holy Quran and have been burning it, throwing it in the toilet and no one utters a word

I really want to know where these Islamic leaders stand. Does idea of Islamic Umma even hold?

- **If we go by your description, the situation looks really grim with Xi Jinping becoming the undisputed, unchallenged, leader of China. Islamic world is not taking any strong stand and the UN seems to be losing its willpower. How do you see the future of Uyghurs and your freedom struggle?**

Xi has got his highest possible power, there are no more challenges in his way for the next five years, but that doesn't mean we accept our defeat, and will watch our people die. The society is slightly conscious about what's happening both inside and outside. The latest outcome of that campaign is that the US has introduced a law. Now, it has been established that a decent number of resources, people, and power are needed to execute that law. The EU has just got the First Draft, and they're working on it. We also need to make the outside world know of how we feel.

We will support our people from outside China and probably inside of China too, because their own people are now speaking up, resisting Xi, his extreme Ultra power and controlling attitude. No one can predict what will happen in the next five years, but our five years will be very grim and we will continue to fight for our rights. ■

CEMENTING BOND WITH NIPPON

TO FORGE A LONG LASTING PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN BHARAT AND JAPAN, INDIAN PHOTOGRAPHERS HAD CAPTURED VARIOUS FACETS OF JAPAN IN A RECENTLY CONCLUDED EXHIBITION

MADHUR TANKHA

Architects of Bharatiya-Nippon Friendship: Former Japan PM the late Shinzo Abe, wife Akie Abe with PM Narendra Modi

With Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi and the late Japan PM Shinzo Abe investing considerable efforts and time to strengthen the bond between the two Asian nations, this friendship was appreciated on the cultural domain at India International Centre.

A wide array of images showcasing a slice of life of the highly industrialised yet a tranquil island nation, architecture of monastery and much more transport visitors to Japan. Not a documentary but a range of standalone pictures were part of an exhibition titled "Japan from India's Perspective" at IIC. This extraordinary exhibition were a part of a celebratory event to commemorate the 70th anniversary of establishment of diplomatic relations between Japan and India. The exhibition featuring kaleidscopic images of Bharatiya photographers seeks to bring the two nations even closer and generate interest among the people of India towards Japan.

Shocked and saddened by Shinzo's assassination, Modiji described him as an an outstanding leader of Japan, a towering global statesman, and a great champion of India-Japan friendship. "He is not among us anymore. Japan and the world have lost a great visionary. And, I have lost a dear friend."

Before leaving for Japan to attend his friend and former PM Shinzo Abe's State funeral at Budokan, PM Modi said, "I will be conveying heartfelt condolences to Prime Minister Kishida and Mrs Abe on behalf of all Indians. We will continue working to further strengthen India-Japan relations as envisioned by Abe San."

Sharing her valuable thoughts as guest of honour at the inauguration, Minister of State for External Affairs and Culture Meenakashi Lekhi stated that both Japan and India have ancient civilisations and that it is wonderful to see two countries that are proud of their distinct cultures share such an ancient and special bond.

The Minister said, "Although this year officially marks the 70th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Japan and India, the bonds between the two are centuries old."

Encouraging people-to-people exchanges between Japan and India, Minister Lekhi described the special exhibition as a perfect example of such exchanges. Minister Lekhi appreciated the pictures on display, especially the ones depicting Japanese culture such as those of cherry blossoms and women clad in kimono, expressing that all the pictures exuded a sense of

Amit K Srivastava captured Kiyomizudera Temple (Kyoto) on his camera

calm and serenity.

Since ancient times, India and Japan share a strong connection formed through historical bonds of culture and religion, especially Buddhism. Even in modern times, the two countries have maintained strong and friendly relations that have persevered for hundreds of years. The relationship between Japan and India is currently prospering more than ever in all the domains, including political, economic, as well as people-to-people exchanges. The photos curated for this section include visits of Their Majesties the Emperor and Empress of Japan to India and visits of Prime Ministers of Japan and India, Prime Ministers' ride on Bullet Train.

Speaking to *Organiser*, Amit Srivastava, winner of 'Click! Japan Photo Contest' in 2018, said Shinzo Abe coined the term Indo-Pacific for both the US and India, Srivastava said QUAD was his vision. "He was passionate about developing India as an economic superpower for a balanced Asia. In his death India has lost its greatest benefactor outside India," said this author-cum-entrepreneur who divides his time by working across Asia and Africa and focusing on storytelling through words and pictures in his spare time.

The Matsumoto Castle (Matsumoto, Nagano) by Siddhesh Dhotre

Aishwariya Rathod's five storied Pagoda (Nikko, Tochigi)

Srivastava's winning image of Kiyomizu-dera Temple (Pure Water Temple) is a 1400-year-old site showing reverence towards nature. Apart from blessing of water, This ancient temple also showcases architectural development of multiple styles through the millennia. At sunset it inspires a feeling of calm warmness. His picture highlights the beauty of the ancient temple against a bustling 21st century metropolis of Kyoto

CR Jayachandran, who has beautifully captured a survivor at the Peace Memorial, Hiroshima, says Takao Ogura was just 10 when the American B-29 bomber dropped the Little Boy on Hiroshima on August 6, 1945. The 82-year-old visits the Memorial every day and feeds sparrows. "He has seen it all, but still has beautiful smile, which no bomb can or could erase." ■

SPREADING THE LIGHT OF SEWA

FOR SEWADIWALI, LIGHTING A LAMP AND SERVING A MEAL WAS A GREAT WAY TO CONVEY DEEPAWALI'S MESSAGE TO ALL AMERICANS. LITTLE WONDER, AS THE 2022 HOLIDAY SEASON APPROACHES, THOUSANDS OF AMERICANS ARE PARTICIPATING IN SEWADIWALI

Food Bank
SEWA DIWALI
SEWA DIWALI

SewaDiwali organised Deepavali celebration at Texas

ORGANISER BUREAU

Deepawali, "the festival of lights," commemorates the victory of good over evil. Hindus believe in the saying *Asatoma Sadgamaya*, *Tamasoma Jyotirgamaya* (from untruth to truth and darkness to light); we light lamps during this auspicious celebration to end the darkness and glorify the divine. Focusing on taking this beautiful festival to the masses in the United States, numerous organisations have joined hands to serve the needy and foster togetherness. The growing food insecurity is a significant threat to harmony in American society.

CHASING AWAY HUNGER

According to the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), approximately one in ten people in America was affected by food insecurity in the year 2018. Many Dharmic centres, yogic, spiritual, and linguistic organisations and Indian socio-cultural organisations in the United States decided to address this issue by launching a massive food donation campaign during Deepawali that year. Interestingly, SewaDiwali, the food drive, is now in its fifth year. It is an attempt by these organisations to chase away the darkness of hunger and provide a great start to the holiday season in America.

MAKING THE BREAKTHROUGH

For the first SewaDiwali in 2018, with over 150 volunteers from New Jersey - belonging to 25 organisations - collected and donated 18,000 pounds of food to 15 Food Banks. It was a fantastic start, but more, the merrier. In 2019, more than 70 Dharmic organisations came together, and SewaDiwali was spread to 11 States involving 1,130 volunteers. That year, the SewaDiwali campaign donated over 49,000 pounds of non-perishable food to 73 food banks. Impressed by the campaign, many townships applauded the tremendous efforts of the Dharmic organisations to help their local communities.

In the Dharma tradition, one of the paths to moksha (liberation from the cycle of birth and death) is *Karmayoga* or virtuous action. In this path, work is a service always offered to Bhagwan. Many Dharmic scriptures state *Sewahi Paramo Dharmaha*- service to society is the service to divinity. Keeping this in mind,

SewaDiwali orgarnised Deepavali celebration at New York

volunteers of SewaDiwali aimed to expand the food drive even further. As the fall of 2020 entered, many volunteer families started preparing not just for Diwali in their homes but also for Sewa Diwali in their communities!

COVID-19 SERVED AS ENERGISER FOR KARYAKARTAS

The SewaDiwali campaign allowed individuals to register their homes as food donation collection centres to increase donations. Suddenly, each community had multiple centres boosting the overall food items collected as part of Sewa Diwali. The campaign's success in previous years encouraged more volunteers to join. However, the deadly COVID-19 pandemic struck the country in 2020, killing over 170,000 people. As the pandemic raged, the economy tumbled, and thousands lost their jobs. But volunteers from Dharmic organisations bravely stepped out of their homes, risking their lives to help suffering people. COVID-19 served as an energiser for the Karyakartas rather than becoming a barrier. As a result, the total donation crossed 290,000 pounds of food- over five times the previous year!

SewaDiwali in 2020 reached 26 States and benefited 400 organisations. The number of drop-off locations touched 175.

Quoting Martin Luther King Jr., the Governor of Indiana, Eric Holcomb, said, "Life's most persistent and urgent question is 'what are you doing for others?'. When many people are going through physical, financial, and spiritual hardships, your actions shine as a beacon of hope."

Selfless service never-ends, and the SewaDiwali volunteers proved that once again. As the pandemic refused to go away and thousands of families still could not put food on their tables, the Hindu Swayamsevak Sangh (HSS) USA nationally coordinated SewaDiwali in 2021, and the food collected reached 550,000 pounds. The numbers kept increasing: over 30 States, 8000 donors, 1800 volunteers, and 315 partner organisations made the 2021 SewaDiwali a roaring success. Over 200 townships recognised these efforts and commended Dharmic organisations' selfless service. The Mayor of Indianapolis, Joe Hogsett, said, "The overwhelming participation from Indy Dharmic Organisations during SewaDiwali is a shining example of unity and generosity." When the food reached many deserving homes, volunteers must have felt the same sense of fulfilment they would feel by worshipping the divine in a temple.

As the 2022 holiday season approaches, thousands of people across America are participating in SewaDiwali. In 33 States of the country, volunteers are working tirelessly to serve the needy. Many States inaugurated SewaDiwali on October 15th/16th in the presence of Mayors and local council members. Lighting a lamp and serving a meal is a great way to convey Diwali's message to all Americans. ■

> **THE SEWADIWALI CAMPAIGN ALLOWED INDIVIDUALS TO REGISTER THEIR HOMES AS FOOD DONATION COLLECTION CENTRES TO INCREASE DONATIONS. SUDDENLY, EACH COMMUNITY HAD MULTIPLE CENTRES BOOSTING THE OVERALL FOOD ITEMS COLLECTED AS PART OF SEWA DIWALI**

SEEDS OF DISASTER

BHARATIYA KISAN SANGH AND SWADESHI JAGARAN MANCH SOUGHT THE CENTRE'S INTERVENTION IN THE GM MUSTARD ROW AFTER GENETIC ENGINEERING APPRAISAL COMMITTEE GAVE NOD TO GM MUSTARD FOR CULTIVATION IN FARMERS' FIELDS

The Bharatiya Kisan Sangh and Swadeshi Jagaran Manch (SJM) have appealed to the Government not to give nod to Genetically Modified (GM) Mustard and said the public authority ought to initially take a choice only after holding parleys with stakeholders and experts. Recently, Genetic Engineering Appraisal Committee gave nod to GM Mustard for cultivation in farmers' fields in the country. In a letter to Shri Bhupender Yadav, the Union Minister for Environment, Forest & Climate Change, the Manch has sought the minister's intervention to "ensure that no GM mustard seed is allowed to be planted, now or ever". According to the missive, the Manch has been opposing "this dangerous and unneeded GM mustard being brought in through the backdoor as a 'public sector' GMO". Coming down heavily on the regulatory body, the Manch stated that the regulatory body, did not take up any review of the crop. "The regulators are joining hands with GM crop developers and are time and again compromising the regulatory regime quite seriously, and they have done so with this GM mustard also." The two bodies dismissed the claim that "GM Mustard is Swadeshi and has been developed in India". "We would like to bring it to your kind notice that in 2002, Proagro Seed Company (Bayer's subsidiary), applied for commercial approval for similar construct that Prof Pental and his team are now promoting as HT Mustard DMH 11. Bayer's application at that point of time was turned down because the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) said that their field trials did not give evidence of superior yield. As is well known, the hybridisation of GM Mustard is achieved by means of the two genes barnase and barstar, derived from a soil bacterium called Bacillus amyloliquefaciens. The bar-barstar-barnase gene is a patented technology of Bayer Crop Science. Bayer is not a Swadeshi company. How can a product patented in their name is termed as Swadeshi?"

According to the Manch, Bayer owns the patent of the genes used in Prof Pental's Mustard has been deliberately concealed from the people of India. Dismissing another claim that GM Mustard will increase domestic production and reduce our import dependence, the Manch said the GMO mustard has no yield advantage compared to Indigenous hybrids. "Data from Rapeseed Mustard Research (DRMR), Bharatpur clearly show that the claim of Prof Deepak Pantel that his GM Mustard would increase yield by 26 per cent is deceptive and misleading as there are several existing hybrid varieties that outperform the transgenic variety DMH-11. In fact, for reasons best known to the developer, the existence of better performing non-GM hybrids from his own stable has been concealed and he has chosen to falsify the data by comparing the yield performance of GM mustard with some of very old varieties having lesser yield. Fact of the matter is that existing non-GM verities of mustard give at least 25 per cent more yield than what in claimed Prof Pental's GM mustard."

In a scathing attack, the Manch stated that the regulators had kept the condition of royalty payment by the developer to Bayer has been kept a secret. "Not only that GMO Mustard is based on Bayer's patented Barnase-barstar-barnase gene system for which royalty shall be paid, it is said to promote usage of Glufosinate, an herbicide from which Bayer will benefit the most through its existing brands. Therefore, it is evident beyond doubt that the nation would be seriously dependent upon MNC for usage of patents and import of herbicides causing greater outflow of valuable Foreign exchange from the country." It needs to be remembered that GM Mustard has never been tested as a herbicide tolerant crop at all, while even the development of this glufosinate-tolerant crop was in violation of India's pesticides regulations. The yield data was rigged and evidence about this has been shared with the regulators by alert citizens and experts. Importantly, major mustard-growing states of India were opposed to GM crops in general, and this particular GM mustard and had not even allowed for field trials to take place.

Highlighting the importance of mustard in the food chain, the Manch stated that mustard is a very important crop in our agriculture and in our food chain. "For lakhs of bee-keepers in the country, mustard crop is a source of livelihood, while mustard crop itself benefits from honeybees' activity in terms of yield improvements. Mustard is eaten directly too in Indian cuisine and mustard oilseed cake is used in organic soil amendments. The fact that such a crop has been exploited for any genetic modification is in itself highly objectionable, and this has happened with DBT funding at that," the letter said.

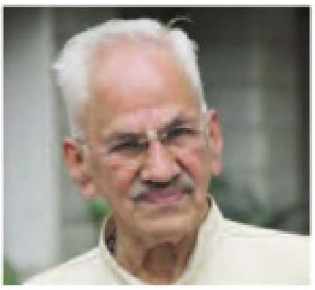
– Organiser Bureau

A REPOSITORY OF WISDOM

SHRI CHANDRASHEKAR BHANDARI SERVED AS THE FORMER STATE ORGANISING SECRETARY OF AKHIL BHARATIYA SAHITYA PARISHAT AND WAS ALSO A LITERARY FIGURE

ORGANISER BUREAU

Veteran Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh Pracharak, former Pranth Prachar Pramukh Karnataka, Former State Organising Secretary of Akhil Bharatiya Sahitya Parishat, Founder Trustee of VSK Karnataka, author, poet Shri Chandrashekar Bhandari (87 years) passed away on October 30, 2022. The mortal remains of the veteran RSS leader Chandrashekar Bhandari were kept in the RSS state office 'Keshava Krupa' for public homage on October 31, 2022.



He was Pracharak for more than 50 years and has been a prolific writer throughout his life. He has written more than 35 books, done numerous translations and many have been translated to other languages too.

"In Sangh, we have come across Pracharaks who have adapted themselves in the society they have worked with even though it was far away from their home states. They have given their entire life for the sake of society. True to his name, Chandrashekar Bhandari Ji has emitted light like that of a bright moon and his works too have radiated immense knowledge in the society. His works are a reflection of his work and concern for society. His work as a Pracharak too has been equally important as his literature, if not more. Any society should have examples of those who have dedicated their entire lives for the betterment of the society. Just as they say 'Salt of the Earth', people like Bhandari ji are the salt of the earth who enrich our lives" said Sarkaryavah Shri Dattatreya Hosabale ji in a event organised by Foundation for Indic Research Studies (FIRST) and Akhil Bharatiya Sahitya Parishat was held at Rastrothanna Parishat at Bengaluru in 2019. Hundreds of swayamsevaks thronged to have a last glimpse of their leader. RSS, Sarsanghchalak Dr Mohan Bhagwat, Sarkaryavah Shri Dattatreya Hosabale, Kshetriya Sanghachalak V Nagaraj, Karnataka Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai, and former Chief Minister B S Yediyurappa have all expressed their condolences on Bhandari's death, among others. "Deeply saddened to hear the news of the passing away of Shri Chandrasekhara Bhandari, a senior Pracharak of RSS, famous author, orator and a thorough gentleman. I pray to God to bless his soul with peace. Om Shanti," In a tweet, Bommai stated. ■

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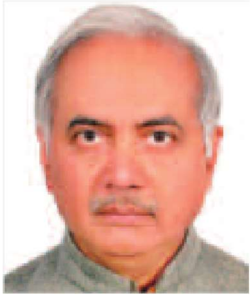
RAJE OF SATIRE

SUDHAKAR RAJE'S COLUMNS FOUND ACCEPTANCE NOT ONLY IN THE (RSS AND BHARATIYA JAN SANGH [BJS] CADRE BUT EVEN THOSE OUTSIDE THIS READERSHIP. ANOTHER REASON WHY WRITING FOR *ORGANISER* WAS DIFFICULT ACCORDING TO RAJE WAS THAT SATIRE WAS ALWAYS TOPICAL



DR SESHADRI CHARI

Former Editor, *Organiser*

Satire writing is an art. Sudhakar Raje perfected that art. How difficult it is to write a satirical piece every week, I asked him once. "Oh, it is easy, but writing for *Organiser* is what is making it difficult," he said. The satire was not lost on me. The *Organiser* was considered a serious paper. It hardly had 'spicy' stories in the ordinary sense of the term. The English weekly started in the wake of the tragic Partition was primarily meant to extend the socio-cultural thought process of the Rashtriya Swayamsewak Sangh (RSS) to the English readership. Naturally, the columns were filled with politics, philosophy and articles evoking a deep sense of nationalistic fervour. It was with great difficulty that the weekly accommodated Lal Krishna Advani's columns on films. So, to find space for a satire column needed great courage and determination, Raje said. But once he started writing, there was no looking back. Sudhakar Raje's columns found acceptance not only in the (RSS and Bharatiya Jana Sangh (BJS) cadre but even those outside this readership. Another reason why writing for *Organiser* was difficult according to Raje was that satire was always topical. Being a weekly, *Organiser* was prepared, printed and published one week in advance. A week is a long period even then, when 24×7 television was yet to arrive. Mobile and Internet were part of science fiction. One important aspect of satire writing was timeliness. The reader should be able to relate the write up with a current topic. But it was creditable that Raje would come up with a timely topic, at times two or three short pieces. He once explained the secret. It is simple, he said. Whatever good or bad happens, the response of the adversaries of RSS/Jan Sangh hardly changed. They have to criticise and make as anti-national a statement as possible. His favourite target was the Leftists, who incidentally never failed him. He was bang-on and always right in what he would expect them to say. "Sometimes I wonder if they read my column and draft their press releases," he quipped with an impish smile. It was my turn to try a wry satire. "May be payment for your pieces is another difficulty as far as *Organiser* is concerned," I suggested. The *Organiser* was struggling in the initial stages, and writers were mostly ideologically committed people who would not expect any pecuniary benefit. But Raje came from a middle-class Maharashtrian family with not much in savings. He recounted an interesting anecdote. After the Emergency and fall of Janata Party Government, VP Bhatia became the editor in 1982. One day Raje was discussing the

The Editorial Rat

BY : SUDHAKAR RAJE

EASTERN PUNJAB RAILWAY

NOTICE

Who's A Gentleman ?

By : Sudhakar Raje

Balance your meals for HEALTH
Cook with DALDA for ENERGY

Sudhakar Raje's articles (Satiricus) from the archives of *Organiser*

paper and its future and casually mentioned his expectations. VP Bhatia readily agreed to look into it and also promised that he would try and increase the amount, from sixty rupees per month to at least eighty! This was the extent of dedication and sacrifice for the cause that Raje exhibited. When I became the Editor, the financial situation turned slightly better. Meetings with Raje became more regular, and every meeting was a learning experience. Initially, I used to ask him to correct some of my writings. He did it for a few articles but then suggested that I should develop my own style of writing. As for style sheet of *Organiser*, Raje and MV Kamath contributed immensely. Raje's articles and his character "ignoramus" became very popular. There was, however one hitch in his articles, his handwriting. There was only one person in the office, our computer operator Pramod Kaushik, who could read his handwriting. Once I sent the copy of his article back to him marking certain words which could not be deciphered. Pat came the reply, "why don't you ask Pramod"? Since then, his writings never went back to him!! Unlike MV Kamath, Raje could never manage to type his articles. Kamath used to say that typing gave him time to think. Raje's retort was, "the more I think the less I write". Yet, Raje wrote very serious and informative articles on Hindu philosophy and the need for Hindu assertion. After he stopped writing for the *Organiser*, he edited an English magazine from Mumbai, his home town, focusing on Hindu resurgence.

> FOR A LONG TIME, THE AUTHOR OF SATIRICUS WAS NOT KNOWN TO THE OUTSIDE WORLD. I ONCE ASKED HIM IF WE COULD PUBLISH THE COLUMN UNDER HIS NAME. WITH A SURPRISED LOOK, HE SAID, "NO. SATIRICUS SHOULD LIVE LONG AFTER RAJE IS GONE

In keeping with his sober demeanour, he never advocated Hindu aggression but clearly supported the creation of 'political space for Hindus'. For a long time, the author of *Satiricus* was not known to the outside world. I once asked him if we could publish the column under his name. With a surprised look, he said, "No. *Satiricus* should live long after Raje is gone". Probably his wish was that some other writer should step in. But no, Sudhakar ji, you have no replacement. We meet you every time we read your columns. ■

Rishab Shetty enacting a scene in 'Kantara'

A TRADITIONAL RIDE INTO MYSTICAL FOREST

BILLED AS A UNIQUE EXPERIENCE, 'KANTARA' IS A STORYLINE EMBELLISHED WITH TECHNICAL BRILLIANCE. 'KANTARA' IS A RISHAB SHETTY SHOW ALL THE WAY AS THE DIRECTOR-CUM-PROTAGONIST SHINES BOTH ON AS WELL AS OFF THE SCREEN

STUTI SARDANA

Film Critic

The film is set in the year 1847 in the Kundapur village of Karnataka. The King of this area is not happy with his life which lacks peace. He keeps trying to find it, and when he comes across a deity near a forest, he finally achieves peace. He makes an agreement with the villagers there and exchanges the forest lands for the deity. Years later in the 1990's, trouble started when the King's successors demanded the lands back. The Forest Department also becomes a problem for the villagers as they start encroaching on the woodland area. Shiva (Rishab Shetty), an easy going guy, takes responsibility and revolts against them. The rest of the film showcases villagers' fight against

A still from the film 'Kantara'

the landlords and the Forest Department.

Shiva lives in a small tribal hamlet with his mother. An unforgettable incident that he had witnessed during his childhood makes him stay away from the traditional Bhoota Kola legacy. He is a vagabond and is happy loafing around with his friends and doing petty jobs for his landlord (Achyut Kumar).

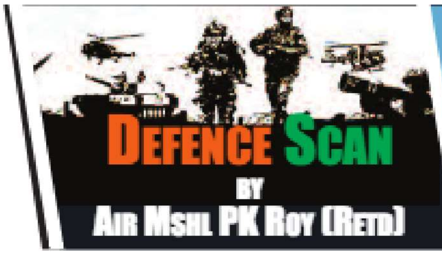
When Forest officer Murali (Kishore) enters the scene, it gives a fresh dimension to the man-vs-nature fight. The film kicks off at a scorching pace. The introduction of a divine spirit that watches over the forest and a stirring Kambala buffalo race within the first 15 minutes or so of the film set the tone. Getting accustomed to sensory overload takes a while. However, once the film's design reveals itself in all its splendour, everything falls into place and draws the audience into the spellbinding Kantara (literally, mystical forest) universe.

Leela (Saptami Gowda), a newly appointed forest guard, is initially caught in the crossfire between the villagers and the Forest Department. But she quickly takes a stand, which puts Shiva in trouble. Landlord, who is also the successor of the dynasty, and now a local politician, also has his eyes on the ancestral property.

> **THE INTRODUCTION OF A DIVINE SPIRIT THAT WATCHES OVER THE FOREST AND A STIRRING KAMBALA BUFFALO RACE WITHIN THE FIRST 15 MINUTES OR SO OF THE FILM SET THE TONE. GETTING ACCUSTOMED TO SENSORY OVERLOAD TAKES A WHILE. HOWEVER, ONCE THE FILM'S DESIGN REVEALS ITSELF IN ALL ITS SPLENDOUR, EVERYTHING FALLS INTO PLACE AND DRAWS THE AUDIENCE INTO THE SPELLBINDING KANTARA (LITERALLY, MYSTICAL FOREST) UNIVERSE**

A storyline embellished with technical brilliance makes this film a unique experience. *Kantara* is a Rishab Shetty show all the way. He shines as the Director as well as the protagonist. The cinematography pulls filmgoers into the film and makes them a part of it. The first half has a very engaging storyline and apt comedy with quirky one-liners in coastal dialect makes the film engrossing. The second half, however, delves deep into the actual story of culture and tradition, blended with a little bit of mystery.

Kantara is a good entertainer; especially the climax is all goosebumps. Rishab Shetty is completely terrific in the role of Shiva. He portrayed the emotions to perfection throughout the film. The love track between Rishab and Sapthami Gowda is handled very well. The actress looked alluring, and she did her part well. Other artists like Achyuth Kumar and Kishore Kumar got good roles with more prominence to this story and were good in it. The action scenes are solid and engaging. ■



DEFENCE SCAN

BY

AIR MSHL PK ROY (RETD)

PRIME MINISTER LAYS FOUNDATION STONE OF C-295 TRANSPORT AIRCRAFT MANUFACTURING IN VADODARA

India's First
Transport Aircraft
Manufacturing Facility

On October 30, 2022, Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi laid the foundation stone of C-295 transport aircraft manufacturing facility in Vadodara. The C-295 aircraft for the IAF will be manufactured through collaboration between Tata Advanced Systems Limited and Airbus Defence and Space S.A., Spain. This is the first project of its kind in which a military aircraft will be manufactured in India by a private company. The aircraft can be used for civilian purposes as well. Addressing the gathering, the Prime Minister said that today we have taken a big step in the direction of making India the manufacturing hub of the world. He said India is making fighter jets, tanks, submarines, medicines, vaccines, electronic gadgets, mobile phones, and cars that are popular in many countries. The Prime Minister remarked that India is moving forward with the mantra of 'Make in India, Make for the World' and now it is becoming a huge manufacturer of transport aircraft.

Sixteen aircraft will be delivered in flyaway condition between September 2023 and August 2025. Remaining 40 will be manufactured in India. The C-295 is a transport aircraft of 5-10 tonne capacity with contemporary technology that will replace the ageing Avro aircraft of IAF. The aircraft, with a flight endurance of up to 11 hours, can carry out multi-role operations under all weather conditions.

RAKSHA MANTRI GRACES 'SHAURYA DIWAS' CELEBRATIONS IN SRINAGAR TO COMMEMORATE 75TH YEAR OF AIR LANDED OPERATIONS IN THE 1947 WAR

Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh graced the 'Shaurya Diwas' celebrations in Srinagar, on 27th October 2022 to commemorate the 75th year of air landed operations of Indian Army at Budgam Airport in 1947, which ensured the first civil-military victory of Independent India. On 27th October 1947, the Indian Army was inducted by the IAF at Budgam Airport to evict Pakistani forces from J&K, a day after the 'Instrument of Accession' was signed between Maharaja Hari Singh and Republic of India. 27th October is, hence, celebrated as 'Infantry Day'. In his address, Raksha Mantri paid rich tributes to the heroes of the Armed Forces and the people of J&K who laid down their lives to protect the unity and integrity of the country. He stated that it was because of their valour and sacrifice that J&K remained an integral part of India and will continue to be in the future. "Our aim is to implement the resolution unanimously passed in Indian Parliament on 22nd February 1994 to reclaim remaining parts, such as Gilgit and Baltistan" he added.

SHRI GIRIDHAR ARAMANE ASSUMES THE OFFICE OF DEFENCE SECRETARY

Shri Giridhar Aramane, a 1988-batch IAS officer of Andhra Pradesh cadre, assumed the office of Defence Secretary on 1st November 2022. In his 32 years of experience in IAS, he has held various important portfolios in the Central Government as well as Andhra Pradesh government.

DRDO CONDUCTS SUCCESSFUL MAIDEN FLIGHT-TEST OF PHASE-II BALLISTIC MISSILE DEFENCE INTERCEPTOR

As DRDO conducted a successful maiden flight-test of Phase-II Ballistic Missile Defence interceptor AD-1 missile with large kill altitude bracket on 2nd November 2022. The AD-1 is a long-range interceptor missile designed for both low exo-atmospheric and endo-atmospheric interception of long-range ballistic missiles as well as aircraft.

NAVAL COMMANDERS' CONFERENCE

The 2nd edition of Naval Commanders' Conference of 2022 was held from 31st October to 3rd November 2022 at New Delhi. During the conference the Naval Commanders reviewed major Operational, Materiel, Logistics, Human Resource Development, Training and Administrative activities undertaken by the Indian Navy in the last few months. Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh addressed and interacted with the Naval Commanders on matters pertaining to national security.

SINGAPORE-INDIA MARITIME BILATERAL EXERCISE

Indian Navy hosted the 29th edition of the Singapore-India Maritime Bilateral Exercise (SIMBEX) from 26th to 30th October 2022 at Visakhapatnam. The scope and complexity of the exercise has risen substantially over the past two decades to include advanced naval drills covering a wide spectrum of maritime operations.

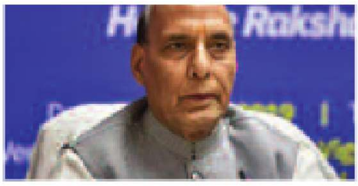
INDIAN NAVY PARTICIPATES IN TRILATERAL EXERCISE WITH MOZAMBIQUE AND TANZANIA

The first edition of three-day India-Mozambique-Tanzania Trilateral, a joint maritime exercise among the Indian, Mozambique and Tanzanian navies commenced at Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania on 27th October 2022. The exercise has three broad objectives: capability development to address common threats through training and sharing of best practices, enhancing interoperability, and strengthening maritime cooperation.

EXERCISE GARUDA - VII AT AIR FORCE STATION JODHPUR

IAF and French Air and Space Force (FASF) are participating in a bilateral exercise, named 'Garuda VII', from 26th October to 12th November 2022 at AF Station Jodhpur. In this exercise, FASF will participate with four Rafale aircraft, one A-330 Multi Role Tanker Transport aircraft and a contingent of 220 personnel. IAF is participating with Su-30 MKI, Rafale, LCA Tejas and Jaguar aircraft, as well as the Light Combat Helicopter (LCH) and Mi-17 helicopters.

RAKSHA MANTRI DEDICATES TO THE NATION 75 BRO INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS



On 28th October 2022, Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh dedicated to the nation 75 infrastructure projects built by the BRO at a function organised at D-S-DBO road in Ladakh. These 75 projects - 45 bridges, 27 roads, two Helipads & one Carbon Neutral Habitat– are spread across six states & two Union Territories. 20 of these projects are in J&K; 18 each in Ladakh and Arunachal Pradesh; five in Uttarakhand and 14 in other border states of Sikkim, Himachal Pradesh, Punjab and Rajasthan. ■

BUILDING AN ARMY OF REVOLUTIONARIES

SURYA SEN WAS A FREEDOM FIGHTER WHO TAUGHT YOUNGSTERS HOW TO MAKE WEAPONS AND BOMBS, HE DIVISED A PLAN TO RAID BRITISH ARMOURY TO FREE CHITTAGONG

Surya Sen remained brave even in the face of death. Before his execution on January 12, 1934, Sen was brutally tortured by the British

OPINION

DR ANKITA KUMAR

Independent Researcher

On March 22, 1894, Surya Kumar Sen was born in Chittagong, Bengal Presidency. He became an optimistic and self-reliant young man as he grew older. He graduated from Behrampore College with a B.A. One of his teachers introduced him to the principles of the Indian freedom movement while he was a student there. He immediately identified with the revolutionary beliefs and joined the Anushilan Samiti, a revolutionary group.

Surya Sen joined the National School, Nandankanan, as a teacher after completing his studies. Additionally, he deepened his commitment in the fight for Indian independence during this time and joined the Indian National Congress, the country's most important political organisation. He was chosen to lead the Chittagong branch of the Indian National Congress in 1918.

He became well-known as a teacher quite fast. He used to talk to his students about the significance of the independence struggle in addition to his regular teaching obligations. Together with similar-minded individuals like Nirmal Sen and Ambika Chakraborty, he founded a revolutionary group.

He was effective in bringing revolutionary ideas to many areas of the Chittagong district by the early 1920s. Given the many difficulties they were facing, such as the dearth of supplies and other resources, he was certain that a covert guerilla attack was currently required.

He planned to assault the armoury of police and auxiliary forces from the Chittagong armoury in Bengal province of British India because he thought that violence was necessary to transform the independence war. To arrange this operation, he collaborated with other revolutionaries like as Ganesh Ghosh, Lokenath Bal, Naresh Roy, Sasanka Datta, Ardhendu Dastidar, and others.

He suggested that the group assassinate members of the "European Club," or the military or Government figures responsible for upholding the British Raj in India, after seizing the two main armouries in Chittagong and destroying the telegraph and telephone office. The elaborate plan also included cutting off rail and communication lines in order to sever Chittagong from Calcutta. Sen intended for this strategy to demonstrate to others that it was possible to go up against the British empire's military force.

On April 18, 1930, the plan was carried out. The police armoury was taken by a party of revolutionaries commanded by Ganesh Ghosh, while the Auxiliary Forces armoury was taken by a second group of ten men under the leadership of Lokenath Bal. The raid, which was carried out in the guise of the Indian Republican Army, Chittagong Branch, involved 65 people in total. Surya Sen, wearing a spotless white khadi dhoti, a long coat, and a stiffly pressed Gandhi cap, saluted the soldiers, raised the national flag to the sounds of *Vande Mataram* and *Inquilab Zindabad*, and declared a Provincial revolutionary Government as all the revolutionary groups assembled outside the Police Armory. The revolutionaries could not locate ammunition though they were successful in cutting telephone and telegraph wires and disrupting the movement of the trains.

However, Good Friday was on April 18, 1930, and most Europeans were at home. They sounded an alarm and killed the troops when they learned about the raid. Surya Sen raised the national flag, saluted the troops, and declared a Provisional Revolutionary Government as the revolutionaries gathered outside the police armoury.

The revolutionaries sought refuge in the Jalalabad Hills near Chittagong following the raid. They were besieged by thousands of soldiers on April 22, 1930, and a brutal gunfight that followed. 12 revolutionaries and around 80 soldiers were killed. The remaining revolutionaries were divided into tiny groups and scattered to nearby villages by Surya Sen. Over the following days, some of them were detained or killed while others managed to flee to Calcutta. Sen himself kept a low profile and constantly changed locations. He held jobs as a farmer, milkman, priest, and other occupations during this time. The other exiled revolutionaries, meantime, were able to patch up their disjointed group.

> **ON APRIL 18, 1930, AND MOST EUROPEANS WERE AT HOME. THEY SOUNDED AN ALARM AND KILLED THE TROOPS WHEN THEY LEARNED ABOUT THE RAID. SURYA SEN RAISED THE NATIONAL FLAG, SALUTED THE TROOPS, AND DECLARED A PROVISIONAL REVOLUTIONARY GOVERNMENT AS THE REVOLUTIONARIES GATHERED OUTSIDE THE POLICE ARMOURY**

When Netra Sen, a group insider, betrayed Surya Sen and revealed his location to the British authorities, the movement was dealt a severe blow. On February 16, 1933, Surya Sen was detained by the police. Netra Sen was murdered by one of the rebels when he became enraged.

Following Sen's imprisonment, Tarakeshwar Dastidar, a fellow revolutionary, devised a plot to free him from the Chittagong jail. But when the police found out about the scheme, they stopped it, arresting everyone involved. The British executed Surya Sen and Tarekeshwar Dastidar on January 12, 1934. Before his death, he was subjected to horrendous torture. Death is at my door, knocking. My thoughts are veering off into eternity. What shall I leave behind you at such a delightful, at such a grave, at such a solemn moment? There is just one thing, and that is my dream—a golden dream—of a free India. Never forget April 18, 1930, the day of Chittagong's Eastern Rebellion. In his final letter to his friends before his execution, Sen urged them to "write in red characters in the core of your hearts the names of the patriots who have given their lives at the altar of India's freedom." Many movies on the life of this brave revolutionary have been made. These include Bengali movie *Chattagram Astragar Lunthan* (1949), *Khelein Hum Jee Jaan Sey* (2010) and Chittagong' (2012). ■

Dr UJWALA CHAKRADEO

Vice Chancellor
SNDT Women's University

PRADAKSHINA PATH AROUND THE TEMPLE

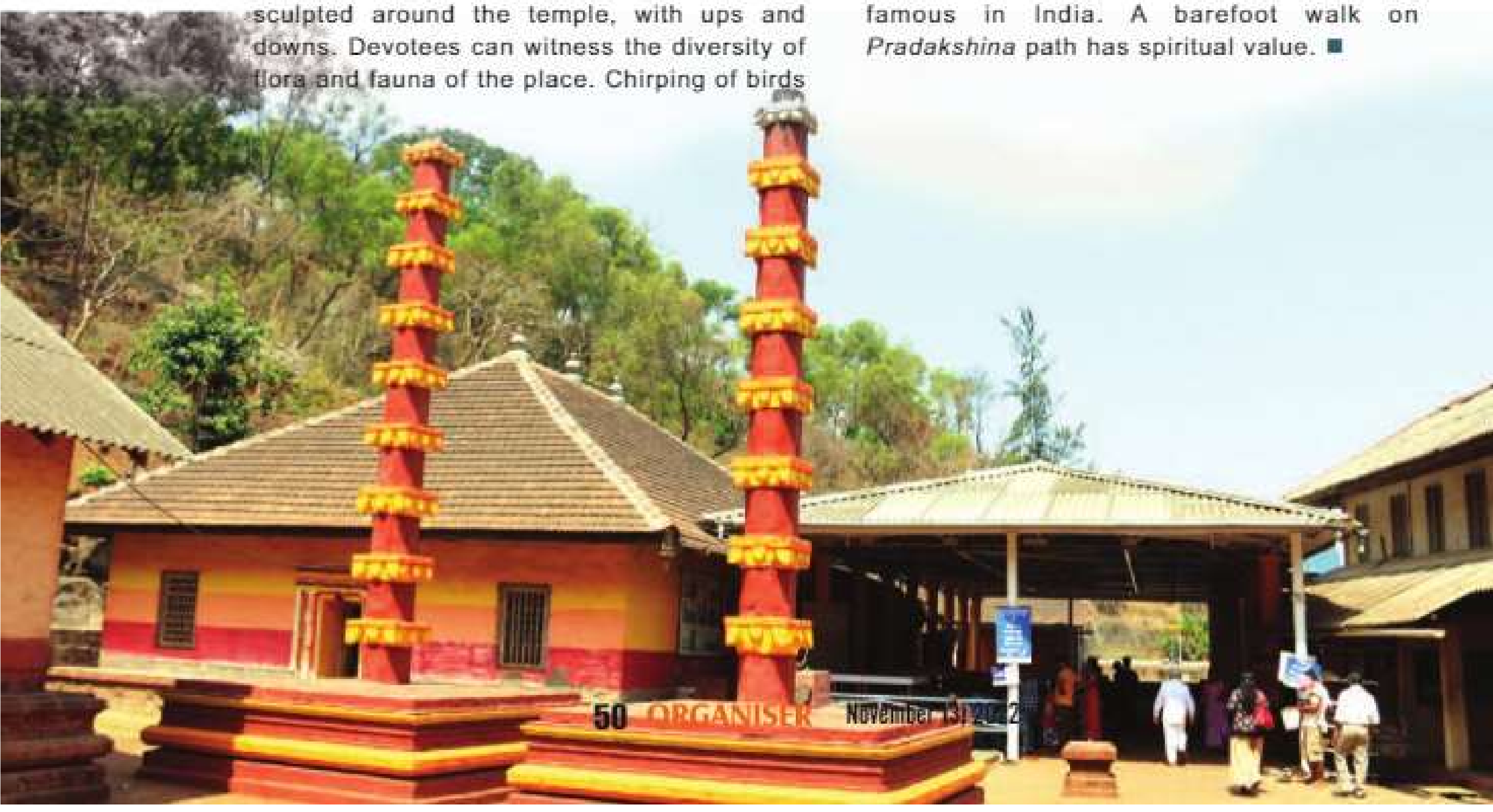
THE MOST STUNNING PART OF THE HARIHARESHWAR TEMPLE, AN ANCIENT MANDIR OF BHAGWAN SHIVA, IS THE PRADAKSHINA PATH HAS BEEN BEAUTIFULLY SCULPTED AROUND THE TEMPLE

Harihareshwar Temple is located at Harihareshwar town in the Raigad district of Maharashtra. It is an ancient Shiva temple. As per evidence, Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj had visited the temple.

Harihareshwar Temple's structure as we see it today was built later in 1723 by Bajirao Peshwa 1. Harihareshwar was the kuldaivat of Peshwas, Maratha king of Maharashtra. There are two temples within the complex; one is that of Kalbairav, devotees are expected to visit this temple first and the second one is the main shrine of Harihareshwar. The place is one of the most famous tourist attractions because of its beautiful serene sea shore.

The most stunning part of the temple complex is the Pradakshina Marg or the circumambulatory path around the temple. The Pradakshina path has been beautifully sculpted around the temple, with ups and downs. Devotees can witness the diversity of flora and fauna of the place. Chirping of birds and gentle soothing breeze from the sea enhances the sensual experience. Some part of the *Pradakshina* path is also within the sea. During high tides, it is difficult and dangerous to move on this path. However, when the tide is low the wet stones under the bare feet impart incomparable sensitivity. On one side is the sea, while on the other side is the stone wall with patterns of cut rock. *Parikrama* means "the path surrounding something" in Sanskrit. *Pradakshina* path is an inevitable component of the temple.

Parikrama or *Pradakshina* is a clockwise circumambulation of sacred entities. *Pradakshina* path is usually built in the temple plan. However it is also an independently a course of pilgrimage. The most appropriate example is that of *Narmada Parikrama*. *Ayodhya parikrama Girnar parikrama* and many others are equally important and famous in India. A barefoot walk on *Pradakshina* path has spiritual value. ■



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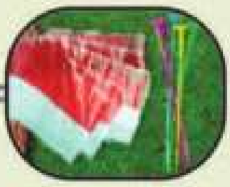

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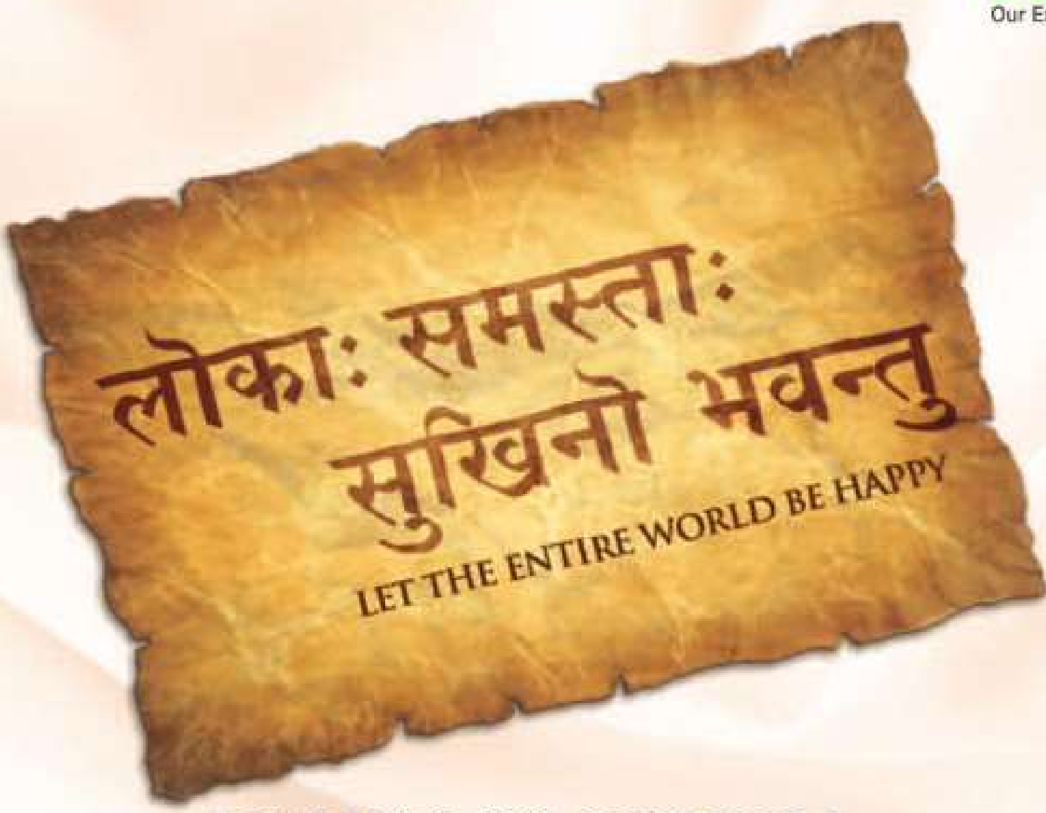
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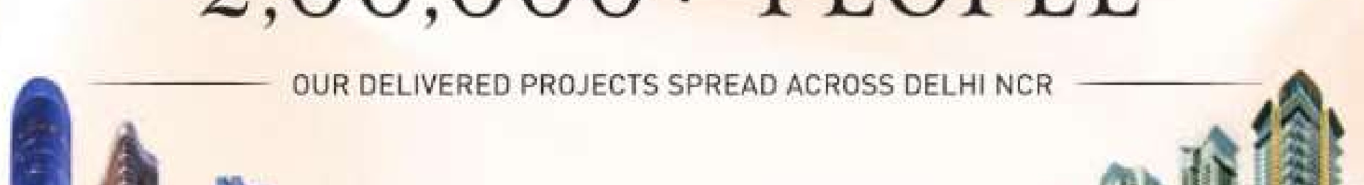
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